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Hafa Adai!

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THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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3 suspects in 'ice' shipment charged

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency agents arrested on Monday three Chinese nationals implicated in the CNMI Division of Customs' seizure of 4.9 lbs of methamphetamine or "ice" worth $850,000 last Dec. 2.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona issued Monday the warrants for the arrest of Xi Huang, Shicheng Cai, and Zhaopeng Chen, all Chinese male nationals.

DEA served the arrest warrants on the three suspects that same day. The three were taken to the federal court for their initial court appearance late Monday afternoon.

According to the minutes of the hearing, Assistant U.S. attorney Garth Backe stated in court that the U.S. government's intention was to seal only the complaint in the case and that any subsequent filings would not be sealed. Manglona

See ICE on Page 4

DPL slams bill that seeks to abolish it

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

In an expected outcry, the Department of Public Lands is vehemently opposing a House bill that would abolish the department and replace it with a body outside of the Executive Branch—countering allegations that they say has misinformed the genesis of the bill.

House Bill 19-89 wants to abolish Public Lands—due to perceived failures in DPL's management—and replace it with a Marianas Land Corporation with a board of trustees who would manage and control public lands in the Commonwealth.

In a letter Monday to House lawmakers signed by acting DPL secretary Patricia Rasa, she said DPL is meeting its constitutional, statutory, and fiduciary duties and mandates.

"There is no need to reinvent the wheel, or to create the additional bureaucracy and expense of a governing board," said Rasa in the letter. "Management of public lands is an executive

See DPL on Page 4

FEMA set to leave on Dec. 18

Federal coordinating officer Stephen M. DeBlasio Sr. has led the Federal Emergency Management Agency's disaster response efforts on Saipan following Typhoon Soudelor. He has been on island for the whole response period and will remain until their Joint Field Office closes on Dec. 18.
FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After more than four months of disaster response work on Saipan in the aftermath of Typhoon Soudelor, Federal Emergency Management Agency personnel are set to leave the island next week.

FEMA's Joint Field Office on Capitol Hill will be closing on Dec. 18.

According to the agency's federal coordinating officer, Stephen M. DeBlasio Sr., they are still working on the various areas of their response work.

» Various disaster response work still ongoing

"We're continuing to work with our disaster survivor assistance teams going out and doing wellness checks with the folks who registered for FEMA assistance just to make sure that they're doing okay and that they're at least on the road to recovery," DeBlasio said.

He said they are focusing on the 109 homeowners whose houses got destroyed, and another 64 renters whose living spaces were destroyed as well.

DeBlasio said they are still doing re-inspections for survivors who may not have gotten enough assistance from the agency

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Local

MVA joins Taipei International Travel Fair 2015

The Marianas Visitors Authority joined the 2015 Taipei International Travel Fair on Nov. 6-9, 2015, one of the biggest annual travel industry events in the Asia-Pacific region.

This year, the fair received 348,270 visitors, a 3-percent increase over last year's fair. The event attracted 950 exhibitors with 1,450 booths from 60 countries.

"During the fair, we saw increased awareness of the Northern Marianas compared to before our Taiwan office opened," said MVA deputy managing director Judy Torres. "We had more inquiries about tour packages, incentive group arrangements, and destination information."

MVA

Marianas Visitors Authority representatives and mascot Siheky of Pacific Islands Club Saipan promote the Northern Marianas at the Taipei International Travel Fair 2015 on Nov. 7, 2015, in Taiwan.

Marianas Visitors Authority deputy managing director Judy Torres, second from right, joins the opening of the USA Pavilion on Nov. 6, 2015, at the Taipei International Travel Fair 2015. The MVA joined other U.S. destinations at the pavilion.

MVA

Tour companies in Taipei, as well as middle and southern Taiwan, have expressed interest in selling NMI tour packages.

"While demand is high, one of the challenges is the limitation of seats on connecting flights from Seoul to Saipan," said Torres. "The flights are often fully booked, and so it makes it difficult to make the connection from Taiwan."

According to the MVA, airlines have expressed an interest in operating direct flights from

See MVA on Next Page

Marianas Visitors Authority representatives and other executives at Taipei International Travel Fair 2015 on Nov. 6-9, 2015. From left, are MVA Taiwan director Milane Tsai, AIT Commercial Section specialist Mei Mei Wang, AIT chief commercial officer Ireas Cook, MVA deputy managing director Judy C. Torres, and Pacific International Travel Services president Helen Cheng.

MVA

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Fire hits barbecue stand; car overturns, 2 injured

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A fire broke out at a barbecue stand in San Vicente, while two men were injured during a vehicular accident, causing one vehicle to overturn on As Terlaje Hill. The incidents happened over the weekend.

No one was injured in the blaze, according to Derek Gersonde, information officer of the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services.

The fire department received a call from the Department of Public Safety's 911 on Friday at 4:31pm about a structure fire in San Vicente.

Firefighters from the Susupe fire station responded and placed the blaze under control at 4:42pm.

Gersonde said the arson investigation unit's investigation revealed that the cause of the fire at the barbecue stand was electrical. The case is deemed closed.

The barbecue stand sustained minor damage.

In the vehicular accident, Gersonde said they received a call from DPS 911 on Sunday at 6:28pm about an overturned vehicle on the upgrade of As Terlaje Hill.

Firefighters and medics from Koblerville and Garapan fire stations responded to the scene.

Gersonde said emergency medical technicians came upon two vehicles, with one overturned.

Both male drivers were brought to the Commonwealth Health Center's emergency room.

Gersonde said one driver complained of pain on the left arm, while the other driver had neck pain. Emergency medical technicians took precautions to stabilize the driver's neck and spine.

Gersonde said details about how the accident happened should be referred to DPS.

As of yesterday, DPS had yet to release information about the incident.

Company penalized $1K for DOL violations

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

An employer was fined a thousand dollars for multiple violations of the CNMI Department of Labor's rules and regulations.

In an administrative order signed by hearing officer Jerry Cody, MDA Enterprises, Inc. was ordered to pay $1,000.

MDA Enterprises was initially denied a certificate of good standing by Labor due to the employer's failure to file employer declarations, non-compliance with the requisite 30 percent workforce participation level, failure to submit copies of employer's withholding tax records, and failure to submit total workforce listing documents.

The employer appealed the denial, based on its good faith offer to produce the missing documents and its promise to file employer declarations in the future.

The company's president testified that if the company could not obtain a certificate of good standing, it would not be able to secure a two-year project with the Northern Marianas Housing Corp.

MDA Enterprise was given up to Dec. 4 to submit the missing documents. After it did so, the decision to deny the certificate was reversed. The ordered fine, however, still stands, although suspended for one year. It would be extinguished if the employer complies with DOL's regulations.

The order states that MDA Enterprise should file a revised workforce plan, a quarterly total workforce listing documents and tax withholding documents, as well as to post future employer declarations on the department's website.

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MVA

From Page 2

Taiwan, but are deterred by hotel room competition on Saipan and inadequate airport facilities on Tinian.

Intern to the Marianas Elain Lai, a high school tourism teacher and writer, assisted the MVA at the event in introducing the Northern Marianas' rich tourism resources. Lai has also made several television and radio appearances to promote the destination and has an upcoming book that will include travel information about the NMI.

Actress and TV host Bear Geneie held a booking signing and quiz session, which attracted several media outlets. Geneie also shared her photo album shot on Tinian, saying you "don't even need to Photoshop the photos. It's very beautiful, peaceful, and quiet."

Torres and the MVA delegation attended the fair press conference and opening ceremony, as well as the opening of the USA Pavilion and the Brand USA travel trade seminar. The Association of National Tourism Office Representatives also held its second "Super Blogger" event with four island destinations actively participating: the Northern Mariana Islands, the Philippines, Thailand, and Malaysia. ***(MVA)***

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Hyatt honors F&B vendors, longtime Club members

By DAISY DEMAPAN
daisy_demapan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Hyatt Regency Saipan held a garden party last Friday in honor and appreciation of eight food and beverage vendors who have been its loyal partners for the last 35 years. The soiree presented an array of unique cuisine complementing exceptional beverages through eight food stations.

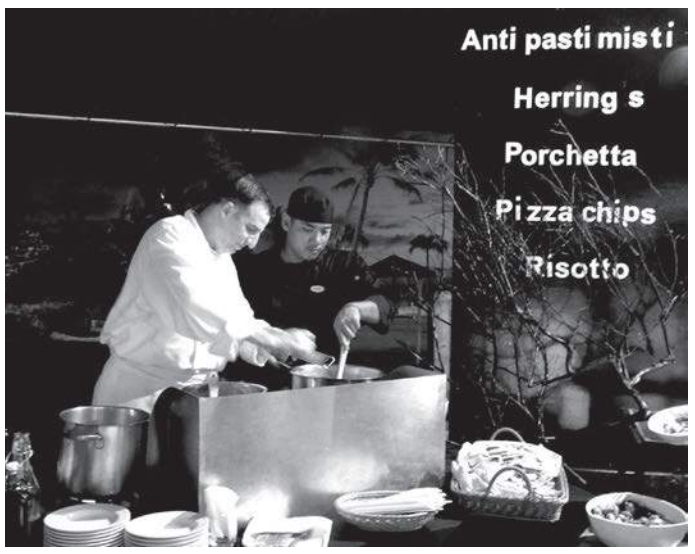
Hyatt general manager Nick Nishikawa shared his gratitude during the evening for the support of their vendors since day one. "We had bad days, we struggled but we survived. This would not have happened without your support…we want to be here with you for 40 years, 50 years and so on. Thank you."

Marketing communications manager Maria Valentina Haberman, who manned the crepe station during the soiree, said they are grateful to their vendors, particularly as the hotel is celebrating its 35th anniversary this month.

Hyatt Regency personally thanked their sponsors and longest standing Club at the Hyatt members, which include JC Tenorio Enterprises, Triple J Five Star Wholesale Foods, Marianas Pacific Distributors, Inc., SPE Saipan Inc., Pacific Trading Corp., Pacific Wine & Spirits, Inc., Yaong Corp., Luen Fung Enterprises, Kumoda Takaharu, Yuki Togawa, Johnnie Fong, Kim Kyung Ja, David Banes, Michael Pai, Steven Pixley, Clarie S. Kosack, Tony Chong, Marcia K. Schultz, Komoda Takaharu, Steven Brownstein, Jerry Tiu, Harumitsu Ono, and William Hofschneider.

Hyatt marketing communications manager Maria Valentina Haberman prepares a signature French crepe at the dessert station.

DAISY DEMAPAN



Hyatt executive chef Gabriele Colombo mans the antipasti, risotto, and pita station.

DAISY DEMAPAN

QC extended to Tinian, Rota casinos

Acting governor Ralph DLG Torres signed into law Friday a bill to extend the qualifying certificate program to the casinos on Tinian and Rota.

Public Law 19-23 amends the Commonwealth Code to allow qualifying certificates for "any business engaged in casino gambling activities conducted within its hotel-casino premises located in the senatorial districts of Tinian and Rota."

Qualifying certificates remain ineligible for casinos on Saipan.

The bill originated in the Senate and is authored by Sen. Francisco M. Borja (Ind-Tinian).

The bill finds that the remote location of Tinian and Rota present an investment barrier.

"Tinian and Rota are even more difficult and expensive to access than Saipan. Given the increased costs of travel and goods on Tinian and Rota, the Legislature finds that financial incentives are required to encourage investment and development on Rota and Tinian," the bill states.

Rota and Tinian have passed referenda in the past to establish casino gaming.

On Tinian, the issuance of a casino license is restricted to major hotel-casino complexes so that the casino industry would be connected to and promote the hospitality industry. ***(Dennis B. Chan)***

DPL

From Page 1

function, and I respectfully request that the Legislature defer to the governor in doing so."

The House bill complains that DPL has been operating and making independent decisions on public lands without the presence, input, and advice of an advisory board, as mandated by the public law that created DPL.

Rasa said this concern is based on a misconception. She said the only specific topics that the DPL secretary is required to consult with the advisory board are a comprehensive land use plan and adoption of any homestead program.

"It is the secretary and the secretary alone who by law has been placed as fiduciary over public lands," said Rasa.

Pete A. Tenorio is DPL secretary.

Rasa said the absence of a board does not hinder Tenorio in his responsibilities.

Further, DPL should not be made out to be the villain for something it has no control over—the absence of an advisory board, Rasa said, adding that they are powerless to establish one because the governor and the CNMI mayors appoint its members.

The DPL secretary has, in fact, repeatedly requested these appointments, she said, and the final member needed to launch the board is the governor's appointee.

DPL's pot of gold

Some House lawmakers have recently criticized DPL for depositing lease revenues in time certificate deposits, calling these accounts a "pot of gold" that should be rightfully remitted to the Marianas Public Land Trust as mandated by law.

However, Rasa said Monday that the accounts were "appropriate."

DPL, she explained, collects security deposits from its lessees and must return these funds with interests when leases expire, or in cases when development or improvement mandated by the lease is completed.

She confirmed that these funds are held in term certificates of deposit and are not invested by MPLT, but this was appropriate, given they must separate these deposits from trust funds and make sure the funds are protected and not "comingled" with other funds.

She said certain funds are on deposit with Bank of Saipan and have been since 2004.

She said withdrawal of these funds are restricted as they are subjected to "Depositary and Non Withdrawal Agreement" stemming from the bank's receivership issues in August 2004.

"The Department of Public Lands inherited these problematic accounts from its predecessor, [Marianas Public Lands Authority], and thus should not be criticized for their existence," Rasa said. "We are making periodic withdrawals as permitted by our agreement, and such funds are then remitted to MPLT as mandated by the Constitution."

Inconsistent lease policy

House lawmakers have also raised issue with what they describe as DPL's "inconsistent treatment" of Kan Pacific Saipan, the owner of Mariana Resort & Spa lands—which are currently out for bid—calling the decision to seek competitive bids a complete change in policy and appears to accommodate new investors while sacrificing those that have been loyal and long term partners for years.

Kan Pacific itself—in a letter to DPL in October—reminded Tenorio of a timeline of negotiations between himself and the hotel for an extension of their lease, which happened to suffer "apparent interruption," blamed on Best Sunshine International Ltd.'s pursuit of these properties.

Rasa, in her letter, admits that there have been inconsistencies in DPL's approach in the past. However, she defends Tenorio, saying he has made great strides to normalize the management of public lands.

"Over the past 12 months [Tenorio] has tasked his staff to develop regulations governing the temporary and long-term use of public lands," she said.

The regulations, she said, have been formalized, proposed, and published in the *Commonwealth Register* in November.

The proposed regulations include underwriting standards for commercial leases; regulating all uses and providing an enforcement mechanism to ensure compliance with standardized lease terms; ensuring that DPL receives a portion of revenue generated by all lessees of public lands; and establishing a minimum annual rent of 5 percent of market value of the lease property, among others.

ICE

From Page 1

granted Backe's request.

Manglona advised the defendants of their constitutional rights and of the charges against them.

Backe sought the suspects' continued detention, citing the nature of the offense and their being flight risks.

Manglona set the detention hearing for Thursday, Dec. 10, at 11am and the preliminary hearing for Monday, Dec. 21, at 9am.

The suspects were advised that they may notify the consulate of their country of their arrest.

Backe stated that the U.S. government was working on notifying the China Consulate of the arrests.

Manglona had the passports of the suspects seized and remanded them to the custody of the U.S. Marshal.

Robert T. Torres, Mark Hanson, and David Banes appeared at the hearing as court-appointed counsels for Huang, Cai, and Chen, respectively.

At a press conference on Monday, CNMI Customs director Jose Mafnas disclosed that the recovery of the 4.9 lbs of "ice" happened during a routine inspection at the Port of Saipan last Dec. 2.

Mafnas said Customs inspected a 40-foot container from Guangzhou, China, that had several consignees and was brought in by Sunleader, a cargo consolidating company on Saipan.

One of the consignees reportedly brought in nine 5-gallon paint containers, and one was found to have three plastic bags that contained the illegal substance. The contents of the bags were field-tested and found presumptive positive for "ice," Mafnas said.

Customs immediately alerted other local and federal law enforcement agencies, including DEA.

Last July 17, a Customs inspector detected "ice" in an air compressor in a container from Guangzhou, China, at the seaport warehouse that led to the arrest of two Chinese nationals, Yuliu Liu and Zhenlin Fang, on July 22.

Sunleader also brought in that container.

In that operation, authorities seized 23 lbs of "ice" worth between $3.2 million and $4.3 million, the biggest drug bust in CNMI history. The case against them is pending in federal court.

FEMA

From Page 1

and filed for appeal.

To date, FEMA has disbursed over $25 million in individual and housing program assistance, over $17.3 of which went to housing assistance, while over $7.8 million were given to other needs assistance.

The Small Business Administration, on the other hand, has already approved 368 home loans and 109 business loans amounting to almost $13 million and over $10.5 million, respectively.

Debris cleanup

Another area that FEMA is currently working on is debris cleanup.

"We're continuing to work with [Commonwealth Advocates for Recovery Efforts], and [Department of Public Works] and the Mayor's Office and [Homeland Security and Emergency Management] on the debris cleanup," DeBlasio said.

He added that they will be focusing on villages such as Kagman 1, 2, and 3 and Garapan.

"The focus is definitely on the continuing removal of debris. I know that HSEM folks have awarded some contracts for additional equipment with operators for the [Saipan] Mayor's Office. I believe they're also working with DPW on some additional contracting support for either equipment or actual services," DeBlasio said.

He noted that debris removal is hard work, especially since debris have to be separated.

"It's tedious, time-consuming, and with a heavy reliance on equipment," he said.

DeBlasio said all eligible debris will continue to be reimbursed for.

Based on FEMA data, almost 35,000 cubic yards of debris have already been collected.

FEMA has already obligated about $7.6 million for public assistance.

An additional $1.6 million approved yesterday by DeBlasio would include projects under the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., which is worth about $115,000; the Public School System, which accounts for $283,000; the Governor's Office, which is about $439,700 for the repair of the Oleai Sports Complex; and the Saipan Mayor's Office.

FEMA also donated 80-kilowatt per hour generators to the Commonwealth that enables the government to use it whenever they need it.

"We have now also transferred 14 generators to the CNMI government," DeBlasio said.

Despite their upcoming departure, FEMA will continue to work on the projects and recoveries being made on island as well as responding to Saipan's needs through their office in the mainland.

With only more than a week left of FEMA's physical presence on island, Saipan is close to getting back to normal.

"Right now I feel that the island is well on its way to full recovery," DeBlasio said.

Bill to get govt employees aboard insurance program nixed

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A policy call to get all active government employees under government insurance and thereby lower premiums across the board has been vetoed, after officials determined that a Senate amendment to retroactively get retirees back into the system would effectively neuter the original intent of the bill.

Both Attorney General Edward Manibusan and Finance Secretary Larissa Larson noted problems with the Senate amendment to get an additional 1,698 retirees on the government insurance program. They say a funding source to shoulder this burden has not been identified and would actually lead to greater insurance premiums, as retirees are expected to make more insurance claims.

The original intent of the bill was to place the Group Health and Life Insurance under the Department of Finance and to prohibit the use of public funds for non-GHLI insurance benefits. But the Senate amendment to allow retirees to re-enroll in GHLI would apparently skew the bill's intent, according to the officials, and possibly—if a significant amount of retirees re-enroll—make insurance unaffordable for all.

Acting governor Ralph DLG Torres vetoed House Bill 19-37 and its amendments on Monday.

Rep. Angel Demapan (R-Saipan)—the bill's author—told *Saipan Tribune* Monday he would be redrafting the bill based on Torres' recommendations.

In his veto message to both chambers of the Legislature, Torres said he agrees with the intent and principles of this legislation.

"However, this legislation runs the risk of increasing costs when its overall intent was to make premiums more affordable for every enrollee…The projected monetary effects of legislation of this type must be understood as best possible before the CNMI commits itself to following this course of action," Torres said.

The acting governor urged the Legislature to revisit the bill's goal to get affordable coverage for employees and retirees.

No funding source

In a letter to Torres Monday, Larson said she supports the bill, noting that many retirees have been left without health insurance coverage due to prohibitions that restrict them from enrolling as a result of not meeting a six-month window before their retirement.

However, she said, there are currently 3,017 CNMI retirees/survivors of retirees and only 1,324 of these retirees are enrolled in the GHLI program as of Oct. 31, 2015.

If the bill were signed into law, about 1,693 additional retirees would be entitled to medical insurance coverage, she said.

While the bill would allow retirees the option to enroll and get the health care coverage that they are in dire need of—from a fiscal perspective—the bill does not identify a source of funding for the government match of the insurance benefits of these retires, she said.

"…Thus adding to the unfunded liabilities that the government will then struggle to address, at a time where it is already struggling to recover from the aftermath of typhoons Soudelor and Champi," she added.

Larson said an additional source of funds to cover the additional enrollees will need to be identified, as the bill does not address this.

Allowing retiree enrollment, she also said, will not necessarily ensure retiree health coverage.

"With the rising cost of medical insurance, many of the lower salaried retirees do not earn a pension that is sufficient to cover the cost of their medical insurance, and thus, the issue of lack of coverage will remain," she said.

Larson explained that retirees with pensions that are lower than the cost of health insurance will be faced with the choice of finding additional financial resources to maintain insurance payments or continue to remain uninsured despite the best intent of the bill.

Rising costs

Larson also noted the rising cost of health insurance in the CNMI.

»Officials fear allowing retirees to retroactively enroll would make it worse

A primary reason for this, she said, is the number of insured with chronic conditions that drive up the costs of coverage for the insurance providers.

Insurance companies charge by calculating risk and charge based on their anticipated expenses.

Insurance companies mitigate their risk by balancing their portfolio with a younger population that has fewer health care needs—typically the average government employee—with the older population of enrollees with greater health care and who use their insurance more often and for costlier services.

"The expense of the retirees… will further drive up the cost of health insurance over the years and this will be compounded further by the reduction in government employees who may opt out of insurance plans due to the ever increasing health insurance rates," Larson said.

Greater experience, higher premiums

In his letter to Torres in November, Manibusan said this ratio of actives to retirees in the system is important because insurance premiums are based on claim experience. "The greater the experience, the higher the premium," he said.

On average, Manbisusan said, retirees make more claims—the claim experience of a retiree is approximately 60 percent greater than the claim experience of an active employee. Given this, if a significant number of retirees re-enroll in the program, it would likely lead to significant increase in premiums.

Over the past few years, the GHLI program has seen significant increases in premiums and the administration has sought ways to temper those increases, Manibusan said.

Part of the bill addresses the issue by preventing public funds from being expended on insurance benefits that are not provided under GHLI—with the idea that this policy would encourage autonomous agency employees to participate in the GHLI program and the percentage of retirees in the plan would decrease.

However, Manibusan notes, any resulting increase in active enrollment will likely be neutralized by retiree re-enrollment, and thus no savings will be realized.

Moreover, he said, if the number of retirees who re-enroll is greater than the number of actives who enroll, it could result in an increase in premiums.

"The impact of allowing approximately 1,500 retirees to re-enroll…should be thoroughly assessed before opening enrollment. Allowing retirees to re-enroll will likely result in increased premium rates and could, depending on how many retirees re-enroll, make the plan unaffordable for all," he said.

Sobriety checkpoints on Fridays

The Department of Public Safety's Traffic Section will be conducting sobriety checkpoint this Friday and next, Dec. 11 and 18, 2015.

On Dec. 11, the first setup will be on Chalan Monsignor Martinez in As Lito, in front of JTV Building on the eastbound lane, from 8pm to 9:15pm.

The second setup will be on Chalan Pale Arnold in Gualo Rai in front of Spring Plaza, on the southbound lane, from 10:30pm to 11:45pm.

On Dec. 18, the first setup will be on Chalan Monsignor Guerrero in Chalan Kiya, in front of the CUC Waterloo, on the westbound lane, from 8pm to 9:15pm

The second will be on Beach Road in Susupe, by the Ada Gymnasium, on the northbound lane, from 10pm to 11:45pm.

In addition, police will be conducting laser speed enforcement along various highways. ***(DPS)***

Sweet Escape operation is finally back in full swing

CONTACT INFO
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Sweet Escape, run by manager and main baker Malyssa Castro, center, and partners and cake decorators Seiji Sonoda and Jessica Sonoda pose after their re-opening.

DAISY DEMAPAN

By DAISY DEMAPAN
daisy_demapan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The island's finest dessert boutique, Sweet Escape, finally reopened Tuesday last week after a few months' hiatus due to Typhoon Soudelor.

The boutique, run by manager and main baker Malyssa Castro with partners Seiji Sonoda, Jessica Sonoda, and Erica Thornburgh, said the closure in the last few months was a trying time for their business.

"We've been closed for months but we couldn't open immediately because our appliances were damaged…due to the humidity and power outages. We had to throw everything away" and basically started from scratch, said Seiji Sonoda, who is also the outlet's cake decorator.

The business originally opened on Nov. 11, 2011, with sisters Jessica Sonoda and Thornburgh taking the lead, but Seiji Sonoda said it felt like they were opening for the very first time again.

When asked how it all began, he said that business has always been in their blood. "We've always had this desire from our parents since the time of the Chamorro restaurant they opened many years ago located on the strip [now called Paseo De Marianas] but the whole concept for the boutique started with my sisters," he said.

Seiji Sonoda went to the famed culinary school Le Cordon Bleu and returned home to take part in the business, which all started with cupcakes.

"It was Seiji who shared all his techniques with us and so we kept experimenting with our recipes," said his sister, Jessica Sonoda.

After much trial and error, they came up with a recipe for delicately crafted fondant cakes that conforms to the weather of Saipan without taking away the decadence of the dessert.

Everything is made from scratch and custom cakes are done entirely freehand.

"It does take us a little longer," Seiji said, but that's one the reasons behind the boutique idea. "It's a very intimate experience and we like to get to know our customers by name," he said.

"Eventually, people were asking us to make cakes and so our primary business became orders and a lot of our flavor ideas were inspired by our customers," he said, stating that over 85 flavors have been concocted since their opening four years ago.

"We are now compiling a list of these flavors for our customers to choose from," he said.

The siblings would like to start soon with made-to-order dessert dishes for dining.

Today they offer a wide variety of pull-apart cakes, 3D cakes, custom cakes, and tablescaping services to bring out the character and personality of their cakes for any event.

According to Seiji Sonoda, one of their biggest supporters in the success of the business is their cousin Malyssa Castro, who serves as the main baker and the front service where customers have a chance to taste their best selling flavors. "She has been supportive of the business since day one," he said.

Sweet Escape is inviting everyone to drop by for refreshing teas, cookies, one-of-a kind cupcakes and cake creations available daily. It is located behind the former Jollibee restaurant building in Garapan.

For more information, add them on Facebook, call 233-3657 or log on to www.sweetscape670.com.

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Following Information/Documents Required
Property Map/As Built Map/ Total Land Area
If available for existing building showing exact location & building details
Owner Title Information
Owner Asking Price

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-16-002

Typhoon Soudelor Disaster Recovery Project - CUC Central Warehouse Repairs

The Office of the Executive Director of the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals for repairs at CUC Central Warehouse in Lower Base, Saipan. As this project is time sensitive, contractors shall ensure that they have a good understanding of the project prior to making their bid proposal to avoid protracted contract discussion that will result in a successful expedited contract award to the selected Offeror.

The Scope of Work and Solicitation Package will be emailed upon request, by CUC Procurement & Supply Office from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, except on government observed holidays, **until December 15, 2015**. Prospective proponents for this RFP must register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division no later than 2:00 p.m. on December 15, 2015 in order to be considered.

A **mandatory Pre-proposal Conference** will be conducted at the Warehouse Building in Lower Base, Saipan on **December 15, 2015 at 10:00 a.m., ChST.** Immediately after the conference, Site Visits to Warehouse facility will be arranged. Proposers shall familiarize themselves with the site conditions prior to submitting the proposal.

One (1) original and five (5) hard copies, along with an electronic copy of the proposal on a compact disk in PDF format must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC Central Warehouse Repairs, CUC-RFP-16-002" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **December 31, 2015 at 10:00 AM,** local time. Submissions, in PDF, must also be emailed to the addresses as noted in the RFP. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

A Proposal Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total proposal price must accompany the proposals. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or proposal bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. *A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful Proposer. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for the protection of all persons supplying

labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Proposers are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Proponents are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proponents due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of proponents' preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract.

Proponents shall be accorded fair and equal treatment. There shall be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing proponents.

This Request for Proposal does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals in anticipation of a contract. This request and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proponent awarded a contract. Successful proponents will be required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page: https://marianaslabor.net/. The proponents shall be required to comply with all applicable CNMI and Federal Laws.

All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 a.m. local time on **December 21, 2015,** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer, CUC P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950 via email: manny.sablan@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, Administrative Assistant, Procurement Division via email: marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org CUC will respond to any questions and clarifications only to prospective proposers who have registered for the solicitation with CUC procurement division.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the Request for Bid in the interest of the Corporation. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

JOHN RIEGEL
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

FEMA to award millions worth of grants to CNMI govt

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Various grants and funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency will soon be made available to the Commonwealth.

Without disclosing an exact amount, FEMA coordinating officer Stephen M. DeBlasio Sr. said a grant will be awarded for long-term disaster case management.

"Soon we will be awarding a grant to the CNMI government and then they will be able to have a provider do a longer disaster case management," DeBlasio told *Saipan Tribune*.

He said the grant is currently under congressional review.

"Right now it's under congressional review because it's over a million dollars. Anything over a million dollars goes to congressional review," DeBlasio said.

"It's not an approval process; that's our call to make. But they just need to know before we push it out publicly," he added.

DeBlasio said the grant information may be released as soon as Monday.

Currently, FEMA has an interagency agreement with the American Red Cross NMI Chapter with their immediate disaster case management.

404 mitigation grant

Another funding that will be available to the CNMI government is the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, which is authorized under Section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.

Unlike the 406 mitigation program, which enables infrastructures that had typhoon-related damage to rebuild stronger, the 404 mitigation funds can be applied on all three islands of the CNMI and even to projects not related to the disaster.

According to DeBlasio, the grant is based on a percentage—about 15 percent—of the total expenditure of the disaster.

"It's going to be about $13 million that will be presented to the CNMI government and they will pick projects not related to damage experienced from Soudelor. It doesn't have to be disaster-related," DeBlasio said.

He said the funding could go on for years and doesn't have to be immediately spent.

"They are already looking at projects. What they do is they get a notice of intent from the applicant who applies through the CNMI government, and the CNMI government reviews the projects and they make decisions on what projects they want to fund and there is a cost-share, which will be 10 percent," he said.

Saipan Tribune Make it your DAILY habit.

'Information charging Mondala with 41 counts is sufficient'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman has ruled that the information charging former Office of Aging director Rose DLG. Mondala with 41 corruption charges "is sufficient."

Wiseman said the government submitted a declaration stating that it provided Mondala with 301 pages of pre-trial discovery.

"The court finds that the government met its burden to show that the information provides Mondala with sufficient notice of the charges and allows her to prepare an adequate defense," the judge said in an order denying Mondala's motion for a bill of particulars.

A bill of particulars refers to a list of written statements made by a party to a court proceeding, upon demand of the other party. The list of itemizes details of a claim or defense.

Last September, the government charged Mondala with 41 counts: 22 counts of forgery; six counts of misconduct in public office; eight counts of use of public supplies, time, and personnel for campaign activities; two counts of use of public position to obtain benefits for business or social acquaintances; one count of theft of services; one count of theft; and one count of use of office, staff or employees of a public office for personal benefit.

According to the allegations, Mondala used the Aging Office's funds and materials for the needs of the Covenant Party during the 2009 elections and to build at her house in Kagman.

Mondala, 71, pleaded not guilty.

Last month, Mondala, through the Office of the Public Defender, sought a court order to compel the government to provide her with a written bill of particulars elaborating on the basis of all 41 counts.

Loren A. Sutton is now Mondala's lawyer after the OPD withdrew as counsel, citing conflict of interest.

Mondala argues that the information does not specify where or what she allegedly did. She claims the government needs to disclose more facts in order to provide her with enough notice to prepare an adequate defense.

In denying the motion, Wiseman said the standard for determining whether an information is sufficient is not "whether it could have been more definite and certain, but whether it contains the elements of the offense intended to be charged."

First, Wiseman said, the information cites the laws allegedly violated, the date of the action, and the action that constituted the crime.

Second, Wiseman said, Mondala requests information as to the where, when, and with whom of the government's case against her. However, Wiseman said, there is no requirement that the information be the sole source of information in order to prepare for one's defense. He said the sufficiency of information is measured in its entire context, including discovery presented to the defendant.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB16-CHCC-022

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: DECEMBER 22, 2015 Time: 10:00 A.M.

"TO MAINTAIN, REDEVELOP AND LINK THE MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH (MCHB) BUREAU'S DATA SYSTEM – EARLY HEARING DETECTION & INTERVENTION AND STATE SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE DATA SYSTEM, A PROJECT UNDER THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION – MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH BUREAU"

COPIES OF THE SCOPE OF WORK MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A BID IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL BIDS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB16-DCCA/NAP-021

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: DECEMBER 29, 2015 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

'FY2016 CLEANING SERVICES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL AFFAIR – N.A.P. DIVISION"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGECY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A BID IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL BIDS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ LAURA T. OGUMORO
SECRETARY OF DCCA

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP NO.: RFP16-COTA/FTA-018

SUBMISSION: DECEMBER 30, 2015 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"OFFICE SPACE RENTAL FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OFFICE OF TRANSIT AUTHORITY (COTA)"

THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR THIS PROJECT WILL BE AVAILABLE ON AFTER DECEMBER 02, 2015 AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGECY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING WILL BE ON DECEMBER 18, 2015 AT 10:00 A.M. AT THE COMMONWEALTH OFFICE OF TRANSIT AUTHORITY (COTA) CONFERENCE ROOM, SECOND FLOOR AT THE NMI RETIREMENT FUND BUILDING, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN.

THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL IF, IN IT'S OPINION TO DO SO, WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE GOVERNMENT. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ALFREDA P. CAMACHO
SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

Robert Tenorio Torres
Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 503758
Saipan, MP 96950

Tel: (670) 234-7859
Fax: (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANK OF GUAM,
Plaintiff,
vs.
KIM EUGENE FORRESTER
Defendant.

Civil Action No. 14-0223

NOTICE OF HEARING ON PLAINTIFF'S MOTION FOR AN ORDER OF JUDICIAL SALE OF DEFENDANT'S REMAINING LEASEHOLD INTEREST ON THE MORTGAGED PROPERTY

Date: December 15, 2015
Time: 1:30pm
Judge: Joseph N. Camacho

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on the 15th day of December, 2015 at 1:30pm a hearing will be held before Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho on Plaintiff's Motion for an Order of Judicial Sale of Defendant's remaining leasehold interest on the Mortgage Property in the above-styled matter, at the Superior Court for the CNMI, Guma Hustisia, Civic Center, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 27th day of November, 2015.

/s/
Clerk of Court/ Deputy Clerk

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Hospital's child patients get gifts for the holidays

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Children flocked to the Commonwealth Health Center on Monday, not because they are sick but to claim their early Christmas presents from the Division of Public Health Service-Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

The bureau, in collaboration with the Ayuda Network, gave away hundreds of gifts as part of the first ever "Gifts for Gifts" distribution to child patients of CHC.

Aside from those who personally came to the hospital, house visits were also made by MCHB to deliver gifts.

"The MCHB is constantly trying to find more ways to bring cheer and happiness to families during this time of the year," said Margaret Aldan, director of Public Health Services. "Thank you very much to our partners for the collaborative work and success of our programs. Looking at not only of the faces of the children, but also, the parents are really very appreciative."

A group from the Department of Public Safety was also there to serenade everyone with a medley of favorite Christmas carols, including a mix of local Christmas songs, providing spontaneous entertainment at the clinic's waiting area. One of the nurses at the FCC said, "Wow, this is really uplifting not only to our clients but to us healthcare providers as well. You should do this more often."

Ann Marie Satur, the coordinator for children with special healthcare needs, said they gave away more than just toys.

"It's a variety of toys to target each developmental area. It's not just a toy to be a toy; it's a toy that has an educational purpose," Satur said.

Among the recipients was a 5-year-old named BJ who got toy construction tools. BJ has a heart condition, according to his mom. Nevertheless, he was extremely excited about his new toy set.

"We wanted to target this year especially because of Typhoon Soudelor. We want to make sure that our families are taken cared of after Soudelor. A lot of our families lost everything that they have so we want to do a little bit of something that will go a long way for them," Satur said.

Bureau administrator TaAnn Kabua said it feels great to be able to bring cheer to the kids, even though their bureau will no longer have their own Christmas party.

"I asked the staff what do you guys want to do for Christmas this year? They said we should do something different. We should give presents to those that are needy," Kabua said.

She said they will try their best to do this every year for the average number of 400 families that they serve.

The gifts were purchased through donations made by sponsors Best Sunshine International, Ltd. Mariana Resort and Spa, Saipan Shipping, and Joeten Superstore.

Best Sunshine donated $4,000 toward the purchase of gifts, wrapping, and distribution. After receiving donations from their partners, MCHB staff purchased gifts for over 200 inpatient and outpatient children, ranging from newborn up to 13 years old.

Best Sunshine chief services officer Tao Xing and Corporate Social Responsibility director Geri Dela Cruz participated in handing out gifts in the pediatric ward and children's clinic.

"It's very moving to be able to bring gifts to these children and see the smiles on their faces as well as their parents' faces," said Dela Cruz.

"Having the event today is perfect because Mondays are normally the clinic's busiest days. It's a blessing for the kids just seeing their faces," said Leslie Camacho, director of nursing. "During the holidays, some kids don't have very much so for them to receive a gift is very heartwarming. Again, it's a blessing to have you guys come out and it's very heartwarming to see, especially from my end."

Best Sunshine, along with Saipan Shipping Co., Joeten Superstore, and Mariana Resort & Spa, take part in Maternal and Child Health Bureau gift giving event. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Best Sunshine and Department of Public Safety personnel belt out Christmas carols to entertain waiting patients. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Staff from the Division of Public Health Service-Maternal and Child Health Bureau pose with some of the gifts that they will be distributing. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Best Sunshine CSO Tao Xing, CSR director Geri Dela Cruz, and CHC staff before distributing gifts to the pediatric ward. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Laos' petition for subpoena is placed under advisement

U.S. District Court for the NMI Magistrate Judge Heather L. Kennedy on Monday placed under advisement the petition of Lao People's Democratic Republic to subpoena Bridge Capital LLC and its co-owner John K. Baldwin and others in connection with the criminal tax investigations in Laos and two international arbitration proceedings in Singapore.

Kennedy said a written decision would be forthcoming, no later than the middle of January 2016.

Attorney Eric Cottrell, counsel for Laos, informed the court that they would be requesting for subpoenas for Bridge Capital LLC, Baldwin, and First Hawaiian Bank.

A subpoena for David Jensen, who no longer stays on Saipan, would be withdrawn, Cottrell said. Jensen used to serve as Bridge Capital's chief financial officer.

Cottrell's co-counsels, William Fitzgerald and John Branson, also appeared in court.

Deborah Deitsch-Perez, lawyer for Bridge Capital LLC and Baldwin, did a PowerPoint presentation in arguing their opposition to the petition.

Deitsch-Perez's co-counsel, Michael Dotts, also appeared. Seated at respondent's table was Tucker Baldwin, assistant to the chief executive officer of Bridge Capital LLC.

In Laos' application, Fitzgerald alleged that John Baldwin is under criminal and tax investigations in Laos for allegedly bribing Lao officials over $300,000 that caused the termination of an audit and cost the Lao government $70 million in lost tax revenue over a five-year period.

Fitzgerald asserted, among other things, that both the Lao proceedings and the arbitration proceedings directly involve entities owned or controlled by John Baldwin and Shawn Scott, who own Bridge Capital LLC.

In opposing Laos' application, Dotts and Deitsch-Perez argued, among other things, that Laos failed to carry its burden to show that the federal court should issue the subpoenas.

Dotts and Deitsch-Perez said the subpoenas cannot have a legitimate basis because Bridge Capital is not the parent of, and does not hold an interest in, either Sanum Investments or Lao Holdings, nor does Bridge Capital have consolidated financials with Sanum or Lao Holdings.

The lawyers said Bridge Capital doesn't do business in Laos; rather, Bridge Capital owners are Sanum executives who have interests in Lao Holdings.

Sanum Investments and Lao Holdings are parties in the arbitrations. Sanum is reportedly the target of the Lao proceedings.

Lao Holdings owns the Savan Vegas and Casino in Laos. The casino opened in 2009 and that Savan Vegas is now 80 percent owned by the Baldwin group and 20 percent by Laos, according to Fitzgerald.

Fitzgerald said Bridge Capital is the parent company of Sanum Investments and Lao Holdings.

But Dotts and Deitsch-Perez said because John Baldwin refused to funnel the investment's profits under the table to government officials in Laos, Laos eventually forcibly stole, among other things, the Savan Vegas casino hotel and resort, a business owned 80 percent by Sanum, a subsidiary of Lao Holdings. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Deposition of witness on medical emergency OK'd

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman has approved the deposition of a witness in the jury trial of former Department of Public Safety deputy commissioner Ambrosio T. Ogumoro and Herman M. Manglona Jr.

A deposition is the taking of testimony of a witness outside of court. In criminal cases, depositions are normally taken to preserve the witness' testimony. To allow a deposition, a judge will usually consider whether there's a strong likelihood that a witness won't be available to testify at trial.

Wiseman approved the deposition after the parties in the case disclosed at an in-chamber conference on Friday that a witness will be going on a medical emergency.

Present at the conference were assistant attorneys general Matthew Baisley and Heather Barcinas, representing the government, Wiseman said. Attorney Mark Hanson appeared for Ogumoro, while assistant public defender Matthew Meyer appeared for Manglona.

The trial of Ogumoro and Manglona was supposed to begin last Monday, but Wiseman rescheduled it on Friday to March 14, 2016. Wiseman did not indicate the reason for the new schedule.

A source, however, disclosed that one of the witnesses has a medical emergency.

The 57-year-old Ogumoro is charged with eight counts relating to theft by deception, misconduct in public office, conspiracy to commit theft by deception, removal of government property, and theft by unlawful taking.

Manglona is charged with conspiracy to commit theft by unlawful taking or disposition and receiving stolen property.

The trial of Ogumoro and two co-defendants in his other criminal case will commence on Jan. 18, 2016.

Man convicted of perjury sentenced to 46 months

Randy A. Igisomar, 23, was sentenced on Friday, Dec. 4, 2015, to 46 months in prison followed by three years of supervised release for perjury. Igisomar pleaded guilty on Nov. 26, 2014.

During his sentencing hearing, Igisomar addressed NMI U.S. District Court Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona in open court and admitted he had lied during his testimony at the trial of Raymond Borja Roberto, who had been charged with three counts of enticement of a minor and one count of witness tampering, and was acquitted on all counts by a jury on Sept. 29, 2014.

Following the sentencing, U.S. Attorney for the Districts of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands Alicia A.G. Limtiaco stated, "The defendant's perjured testimony was an affront to our system of justice. The United States Attorney's Office, together with its federal law enforcement partners, will continue in its efforts to ensure that those who obstruct justice are held accountable and prosecuted for their crimes."

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and prosecuted by assistant U.S. attorneys Ross K. Naughton and Garth R. Backe. ***(USAO)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp
Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

PUBLIC NOTICE

(This Notice is paid by NMHC with HUD Funds.)

Governor Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Governor/ Acting Governor Ralph DLG. Torres, and the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairman, Mr. Edward C. Sablan, wish to announce that its Consolidated Annual Performance Report (CAPER) for Program Year 2014 is available for review. Comments made by the general public should be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m. on December 24, 2015. Written comments must be submitted to the NMHC Office in Garapan, Saipan, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, or by contacting Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director, at 234-9447/7689.

The report will be submitted to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Honolulu Office, by December 31, 2015. The CAPER encompasses the performance assessment of all HUD-funded programs, administered by the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands

The report is available at the NMHC Central Office in Saipan and at the respective NMHC Field Offices in Rota and Tinian during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

Edward C. Sablan
Chairman of the Board

"NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency"

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INVITATION TO BID
NMHC IFB 2016-001

This ad is paid for with HUD funds.

Oleai Sports Complex Track and Field Renovation

Governor Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Governor Ralph DLG. Torres, through the Northern Mariana Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, hereby give notice that NMHC is soliciting sealed bids from interested, licensed companies to provide Construction Services for the **Renovation of the Oleai Sports Complex Track and Field** in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Island.

Prospective Bidders or firms may pick up a set of the Project Package beginning **Wednesday, December 9, 2015** at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI and austerity holidays. E-mail of the Project Package set will be allowed and a non-refundable payment is required. A non-refundable payment of **Fifty Dollars ($50.00) is required for each set**. Payment shall be by cash, credit card, money order or cashier's check (payable to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation).

Bidders are also advised that this project is subject to compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act. All wage rates for laborers, mechanics and all other employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid the current minimum wage or the wage determination for the Commonwealth as specified in CM130001 for the Mariana Islands.

A **mandatory pre-bid conference** will be held at **10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, December 23, 2015,** at the NMHC Conference Room in Garapan, Saipan. A project site visit will be made as part of the mandatory pre-bid conference for the prospective bidders to familiarize themselves with the required work. Attendance at this pre-bid conference and site visit are considered essential to the prospective bidders' understanding of the project elements and a prospective bidder or company that does not have a representative in attendance at the mandatory pre-bid conference will be considered as a non-responsive bidder.

All inquires shall be in writing and addressed to Mr. Jesse S. Palacios, Corporate Director, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 or faxed to (670) 234-6866. Inquires must be received no later than 4:30 p.m. local time, December 28, 2015.

Sealed Bids must be marked **NMHC IFB 2016-001**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director, Procurement and Supply, Lower Base Drive, Saipan, no later than **10:00 a.m. local time, Friday, January 8, 2016.** Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 10:00a.m., local time, January 8, 2016 and must be the transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515 or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com For bidders located outside of the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S Postal Service or the official government postal service no later than **Friday, January 8, 2016** and the ITB documents must be received at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base Drive no later than **Tuesday, January 19, 2016.** Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicity opened and read aloud at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at **10:00 a.m. ,local time, Wednesday, January 20, 2016.** However if no noticed of intent to bid are received from bidders outside of the CNMI, the bids will be opened at **10:30 a.m., local time, Friday, January 8, 2016.**

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars ($25,000.00), a bid security of fifteen percent (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. This security may be in the form of a Certified Check, Cashier's Check, or Bid Bond. Checks must be made payable to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC), with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check. Surety companies must hold a Certificate of Authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable le to the Attorney General.

Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, however, Article 7, "Local Business Preference" is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funding for this project.

The bidder submitting the lowest responsible bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the lowest CNMI Procurement Regulations NMIAC Section 70-30.3-245. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract price. Pursuant to Governor's Directive 251 dated March 15, 2006, bidders are required to include a Clearance from the Office of the Insurance Commissioner with respect to the financial bonding capability of the bidders' chosen Surety.

Performance time for completion of this project is One Hundred Fifty (150) calendar days. Liquidated damages will be assessed at One Hundred Twenty Five Dollars (US$125.00) per calendar day for delays beyond the established completion date.

This project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds provided to the commonwealth. This project is also subject to section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 which requires recipients of HUD funds and the contractors to help insure that the economic opportunities generated by these HUD funds are provided to local low-income residents and the business that serve them "to the maximum extent feasible".

NMHC hereby notifies bidders that it will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, women and small business enterprises will be affordable full opportunity to submit proposals and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, and disability status.

All documents received shall be the sole property of the NMHC with the exception of the Bid Bond, Certified Check, or Cashier's Check, which will be returned to the proposers after the acceptance and award of contract to the successful contractor.

The Government reserves the right to reject and all proposals and to waive and defects in the said proposals, if in the sole opinion of NMHC, to do so would be in its best interest. All proposals will become the property of the Government.

For information, contact Mr. Jesse S. Palacios, Corporate Director or Mr. Jacob Muna, Planner/Environmental Officer at (670) 234-6866/7689 during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI and austerity holidays.

Edward C. Sablan
NMHC Board Chairman & Contracting Officer

Herman S. Sablan, Director
Division of Procurement & Supply

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

San Bernardino massacre: The terror cell with a baby

MARCUS YAM/LOS ANGELES TIMES/TNS

Community members attend a candlelight vigil at San Manuel Stadium in San Bernardino, Calif., on Thursday, Dec. 3, 2015, a day after a shooting at the Inland Regional Center that killed 14 and wounded 21.

Before Syed Rizwan Farook and his wife, Tashfeen Malik, slaughtered innocents in San Bernardino, Calif., they performed a prudent and commonplace mission of mercy: They dropped off their 6-month-old daughter with Grandma for safekeeping. The couple reportedly said they were heading to an appointment with a doctor. Surely they didn't say they'd be meeting a pathologist at an autopsy table.

That delivery of a youngster to a trusted relative was a shrewd if probably unwitting act of propaganda: Farook and Malik subtly launched their terror mission without firing a shot. We know them now as the terror cell next door, ordinary neighbors with a registry for baby gifts.

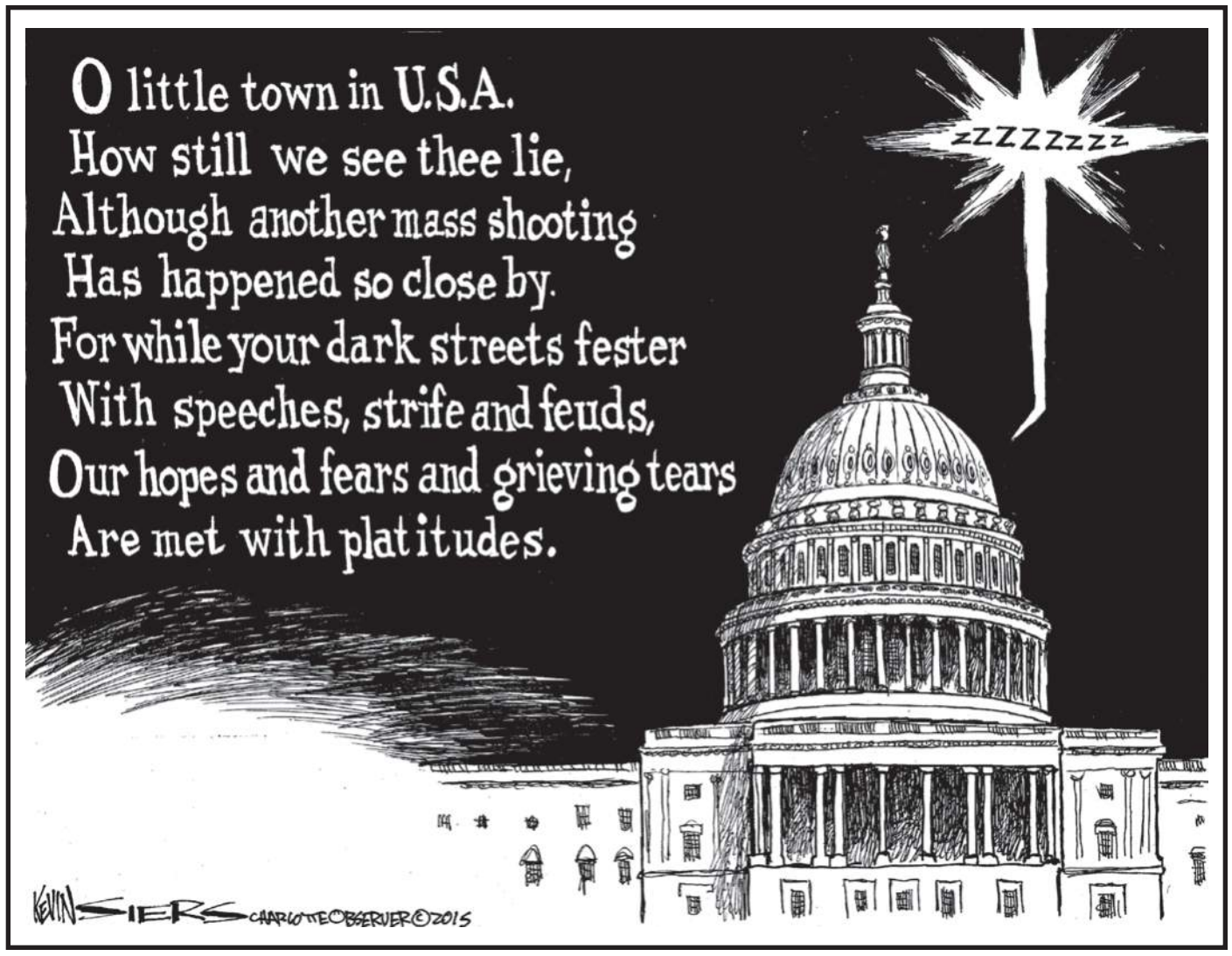
If we believe Thursday's reports that Farook had transformed into a radical—not a madman, an ill person, a racial supremacist or any other familiar category of mass murderer—then he and Malik will force us to think with new imagination about terror operations on U.S. soil. Farook and Malik evidently didn't qualify for anyone's watch list. What's most striking isn't who they were, but who they weren't:

Fourteen years ago, Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida masterminds of the 9/11 attacks couldn't rely on American-grown talent; they had to infiltrate their operatives into this country. By disturbing contrast, Islamic State extremists in Syria and Iraq last month demonstrated their ability to influence far-off Europeans who waged the bloodbath in Paris.

And San Bernardino? We can't speculate on what the FBI analysis of Farook and Malik's telephone traffic, email threads and Internet travels ultimately will reveal; these forensic investigations can yield unanticipated associates, networks or hierarchies. At the get-go, though, this case focuses on two people whose lives appeared to have much in common with how the rest of us live.

The spontaneous radical—if that's the pathology here—just isn't a familiar figure in U.S. terror lore. The Tsarnaev brothers of Boston Marathon infamy come inexactly to mind, as do a

See EDITORIAL on Next Page


O little town in U.S.A.
How still we see thee lie,
Although another mass shooting
Has happened so close by.
For while your dark streets fester
With speeches, strife and feuds,
Our hopes and fears and grieving tears
Are met with platitudes.
zzzzzzzz
KEVIN SIERS CHARLOTTE OBSERVER ©2015

Korean Kapi

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara previously taught at SVES in the CNMI. A peripatetic pedagogue, he last taught in China but makes Honolulu, Shenyang, and Saipan home. He can be reached at pinoypanda2031@aol.com.

A newborn understands that when hungry ze utters "mum-mum-mum" and mother nurses the child. "Mama" is a global word phenomenon; I am not sure where "da-da" is grounded but it seems universal as well (and "dada" in *Zhongwen* is "big brother," another term for the father who is the older male; a younger boy is "didi"). Perhaps "mama" is sensual abstracted; "dada" is abstracted relational.

Semantics is not our focus. Ludwig Wittgenstein was helpful in teaching that "meaning" of a word is derived from use, not in the dictionary definition of the word. A Korean colleague asked if I would join him in Korean Kapi, and when I repeated "coffee" he smiled. "No, *kapi* (pronounced "copy")," he reiterated. Why not? Pinas says *kape,* why not *kapi* in Hanguk*?*

My neighbor tells of his wife exclaiming on the parking lot after seeing me with a shirt on: "Oh, my, it is Jaime; I did not recognize him with his shirt on!" My neighbor smirked. He saw me often after Soudelor on our walkway without a shirt on when our electricity came rationed, brushing off crusted salt on seashells, sweating out the tropical heat. A New Yorker, he says that his wife "plays with the men" and "he with the ladies" when they are in their retirement home in Florida. Once he bumped into one of his tennis partners at the local store and exclaimed: "My dear, I've never seen you with a dress on!" Her grandson stared in disbelief. The tennis attire is short and shirt. The meaning of a word is in the mind of the user.

GOP presidentiable Ben Carson on stage delights his audience by asking them to raise their hands if they remember their b-day, then proceeds to describe what happened. A portion: *"The sound waves had to leave my lips, travel through the air into your external auditory meatus, travel down to your tympanic membrane, and set up a vibratory force…coming down the tract of Vicq d'Azur, retrieving the memory from the medial hippocampal structures and the mammillary bodies, ...descending to the cervicomedullary decussation into the spinal cord gray matter, synapsing, and going out to the neuromuscular junction, stimulating the nerve and the muscle so you could raise your hand."* Meaningful? It depends. But Carson impressively raps more than 200 words in a minute. The retired neurosurgeon knows his scientific jargon.

Our broad understanding of how the brain works traces sense stimuli from the medulla oblongata to the emotive cerebellum before it gets to the cognitive cerebrum where the issue of meaning and significance gets articulated in words and numbers. What separates our humanity from the rest of the animal kingdom is the ability to do the three steps (use the brain fully) before acting.

A Peace Corps volunteer in an orientation relates how he took a Filipino shower (with *tabo*) in his second floor dwelling on his first year when a voice from under the house rang out loudly saying, *Tubig* (water)! His water had dripped down to the first floor. Being a sport, and to practice his language, the volunteer responded: *Dili, midyom lang!* The French has expressive *garde loo,* "watch out for water," and loo, indeed, small, medium, or large.

Across the English channel, the royals employed a royal hind wiper called the "groom of the stool," which no longer comes as a surprise after watching Chinese grandmas wipe their child's *heine* until they are 6. The Papas get that assignment in Shanghai and environs.

The Chinese are taught *Hanzi* with each character given a specific meaning; students learn their English the classical *Zhongwen* way, *ergo* each English word has a definite meaning. Learning English the Chinese way visually focuses on the dictionary rather than on audio familiarity.

English is a phonetic language with less than 50 sounds on its phonemes. We can learn language naturally and directly without coursing it through a native tongue. The brain learns by describing what it sees, hears, smells, tastes, and touches, expresses feelings, articulates ideas and thoughts before formulating actions and deeds. This pattern is universal regardless of ethnicity; it learns and assigns a word for every experience.

Of course, teaching language is not just a pedagogical refinement. I was asked to teach foreign Soudelor disaster volunteers on Saipan to speak their English, and started with the "hear and repeat" method on body parts as a start; I missed the organizer's role in the learning process. Though not particularly refined in his English, he fancied himself as the groups' translator, which defeated our pedagogy of "hear and repeat." Listeners remembered his translation word rather than the English counterpart.

After I asked that he defer from translating and that the learners did not need to defer to him each time I asked a question, I hit a nerve and he immediately declared that we stop as he thought the group would be better off seeking a Caucasian teacher who will pronounce words better.

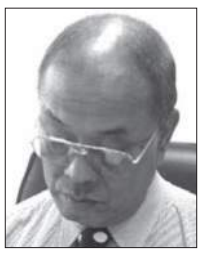
Korean *kapi,* anyone?

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Other local matters

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.*



In life as in leadership there are consequences for bad behavior. In public life (office) any leadership decision in violation of the law is usually met with court review. Unless a sitting governor instantly commutes your jail sentence you're destined to spend time at DOC.

It is the work of these lords of weeds that have destroyed our reputation, shifting from paradise to the Isle De La Corruption. I felt really humiliated and wounded hearing such viewpoint from representatives of Fortune 500 companies. They just headed to jet ways and left!

Why was I so upset? It was a grand opportunity to make a difference over empty speeches about poverty and the lack of clear solutions on self-sufficiency. In either case the prognosis of our fiscal future is in the trash bin. See if you could salvage it. Good luck!

Salt In Air: There's the scent of salty air in the cool December breeze. It reminds me: Whatever happened to elected public officials who took free trips to Hong Kong and Macau sometime a year or so ago and came back with an instant soba-like casino legislation? Wasn't an elected official impeached in recent past for allegations of corrupt behavior?

In like fashion, isn't it fitting that other—to borrow a newly coined term—corruptocrats seek self-impeachment via resignation from office to uphold a standard they've held against others? Why the apparent attitude of inconsequence? Why flaunt double standard?

Or are you exempt from the same standards you've set yourself? Isn't a set standard the same as the equal application of laws? Or have corruptocrats find basking in flawed logic their new fad? Governance deserves its Christmas gifts too and we all look forward to "integrity" gift-wrapped in your resignation!

Distrust: The spread of distrust, like terminal cancer, makes firm belief in government basically kaput! Villagers have had to endure hardship hailing from negligence and indifference. Its effect is sheer alienation of the multitude in the villages. Most of our people are discouraged, anxious or just angry! Whatever happened to the now suspect "solutions driven" team? Why employ illogical rhetoric on poverty over hardnosed analysis on real solutions to lift the quality of life here?

Snoozing: Appalling how Saipan legislators have just found out the importance of basic infrastructure emplacement to meet growth here. But then, like I've said before, we often derail into "advancing to the rear" which is what's happening today.

With water aquifer scarce up north, maybe it's good for DPL to postpone any further land leases until this issue is resolved. Otherwise, investors would have to settle for very expensive RO. What's the other drawback with RO? Some 70 percent is waste and you can't just dump it in the open waters. EPA would nickel you to death! That said, it doesn't mean it could be used advancing to the rear too.

More snooze: This government is broke, saved by the accrual system that permits spending without actual collection. It is still broke! You do the math and figure out that it owes more than a billion dollars. CUC has debts with CDA to the tune of $50 million, it is owed $30 million by agencies and the NMI has to pay the unfunded liability to the Retirement Fund of some $789 million. Now the focus is raiding the MPLT for quick fixes! Insolvency in no longer at the front door! It's in our living and bedrooms as well!

Ailments: More of our people are being afflicted with heart problems and adult onset diabetes. Both instances have direct links to food and sedentary lifestyle we've adopted and honed over the years. To make matters worse, we gobble up food then turn to our new couch-potato culture. It's the red carpet for obesity, diabetes and heart problems. Why the self-inflicted fatal illness?

Slide: Land compensation is the longstanding issue in the last century. From the lack of resolve among the elected elite to settle it with finality doubled down by the lack of funds it begins to slide into its permanent seat as a longstanding issue in perpetuity or the 21st century. Is it hard paying landowners what's due them? Nah! It's the process that people at the helm find difficult resolving in order to get to point "A". It's the first hurdle that is hardest to reach.

Unbridled: The House Committee on Natural Resources wants to dismantle DPL like it's never been done before. I understand where the guys are coming from or issues spinning into denial of political disposition prohibited by the Constitution. The intent is to keep it away from politics. What the House wants is the complete opposite. Politicize and dismantle it beyond recognition then return and engage redundant review. Call it "advancing to the rear."

Shift: The president of NMC steps down next year. Reasons for her resignation were not explained. The issue, though, isn't the top post as much as the fact that the board is highly political as to forego nailing the very purpose of NMC as an institution. And so the board's performance versus its mandate are gulfs apart.

What's my point? Every successful country in the global village has an institution of higher learning that guides the planning process through thorough research on policy issues. It plays a key role in the formulation of policies from economics to education. Definitely, it includes professionals doing research work and other requisites who are "thinkers" beyond conventional wisdom. Having a master's degree is insufficient. Must find out your thesis and education the latter to dissect if it has prepped you to be a thinker.

EDITORIAL

From Page 10

few less accomplished killers. U.S. intelligence and law enforcement services, though, are more attuned to the potential sleeper cell, dispatched to cause havoc at some future time, or the lone wolf whose telephone metadata, online communiques or loose lips leave clues. Six weeks ago, FBI Director James Comey told an audience of intel officials that the feds have about 900 active investigations of potentially violent actors nationwide. The vast majority involve possible efforts by Islamic State to recruit or influence followers.

Set aside all early speculation on Farook and Malik's motives. At this writing, anyone who really comprehends isn't talking. For all the rest of us know, they could be the last, lethal incarnation of the Symbionese Liberation Army—or two kooks who want the letter "Z" stricken from the alphabet.

What we know for certain is that they succeeded at any terrorists' central goal—less to defeat a population than to frighten it. We also suspect that their actions—and their outwardly ordinary lives—will make suspicion of patriotic and lawful Muslim Americans more acute. The enormity of this pair's arsenal, including their in-home bomb factory, will cause some Americans to look askance at others.

That's an injustice that all of us, Muslim or not, should lay at the feet of Islamist extremists. Their acts of terror have invited frightened Americans to level accusations of guilt by association. To create divisions.

That said, Farook and Malik should force all of us—again, Muslim or not—to join in imagining new ways to identify, report and interdict potential terrorists, be they religious extremists or other breeds of would-be mass murderers. That's more difficult if the bad actors, rather than plotting sneaky entries into the U.S., instead are otherwise unremarkable people making sure they've brought enough diapers.

This is a fraught moment for America. We want home-grown terrorism exterminated, whether its perpetrators are radicalized ideologues, rogue independents or gangbangers on the streets. The oddity of a terror cell with a baby is but one more phenomenon we have to address with the same fearless resolve.

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Crime prevention in a free society

By JOHN M. CRISP
Tribune News Service

John M. Crisp, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, teaches in the English Department at Del Mar College in Corpus Christi, Texas. Readers may send him email at jcrisp@delmar.edu.

The 2002 film *Minority Report* postulates a future in which a special police unit can detect crimes before they occur and thereby both prevent the crime and punish its perpetrator. Certainly preventing crimes is better than pursuing, prosecuting and punishing criminals, but two recent, related news stories illustrate how difficult this is in a free culture like ours.

Gilberto Valle, a former New York City police officer, is the "Cannibal Cop." In March 2013 he was convicted of conspiring with others in Internet chat rooms to kidnap, torture, rape, cook and eat young women, including his wife.

His lawyer contended that her client never intended to carry out his perverse fantasies, that the crimes were only imagined inside of Valle's bizarre mind. She said, "These are thoughts, very ugly thoughts, and we don't prosecute people for their thoughts."

The jury didn't see it that way. Nevertheless, a year later a judge overturned the guilty verdict, citing insufficient evidence that Valle's chat room activities were anything other than "fantasy role play." Last Thursday, the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit affirmed the judge's opinion by a 2-1 vote.

It's complicated. Had Valle actually committed any of the gruesome crimes that he fantasized, his online activities would have been damning evidence against him, an after-the-fact answer to the question, "Why didn't we see this coming?"

On the other hand, the case of the Cannibal Cop doesn't entirely settle this basic question of the Internet age (as expressed by the *New York Times*): "When does a plot discussed in Internet chat rooms cross the line into actual criminality?"

Nevertheless, I'm happy to live in a culture that values the privacy of each citizen's mind, no matter how gruesome and unseemly, that we spend time and energy addressing questions like these.

Meanwhile, in Los Angeles, crime prevention is taking an only slightly less-complicated tack. On Nov. 26, the city council voted to authorize the city attorney to consider a proposal to collect license plate numbers of cars seen in areas known for prostitution and to send the car owners Dear "John" letters.

According to an Associated Press report, similar letters used elsewhere are typically written in a "cordial tone," reminding recipients that prostitution isn't a "victimless crime," nor is it "an act between two consenting adults."

Civil libertarians have pushed back over this assumption of guilt, but one city council member says, "If you aren't soliciting, you have no reason to worry about finding one of these letters in your mailbox."

She doesn't say what happens if your mother, girlfriend or wife takes in the mail for you that day.

I'll decline to take a position on these two efforts to prevent crimes before they happen, except to note the complexity, controversy and tinge of sanctimony embodied in both.

And to wonder, if we want to prevent crime, why we don't go for the lower-hanging fruit.

For example, the notion that more educated citizens are much less likely to wind up in prison is thoroughly intuitive. It's also borne out by study after study. The relationship between education and crime can be expressed in a number of ways, but here's an example from The American Prospect:

In 2008, Texas spent $175 million to imprison residents from just 10 neighborhoods in Houston. Of the six Houston schools evaluated "lower-performing" five are in the neighborhoods with the highest rates of incarceration. Of the 12 higher-performing schools, eight are in the lowest-incarceration neighborhoods.

Yet while Texas spends more than $21,000 per year to keep an inmate incarcerated, it spends around $9,500 to educate each student. Other examples abound.

But while we worry about whether prostitutes and "Johns" are actually consenting adults, we're distracted from the fact that spending more and working harder on education could actually prevent crimes long before they happen. Just like in *Minority Report.*

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 25 mph.
▲88° ▼77°

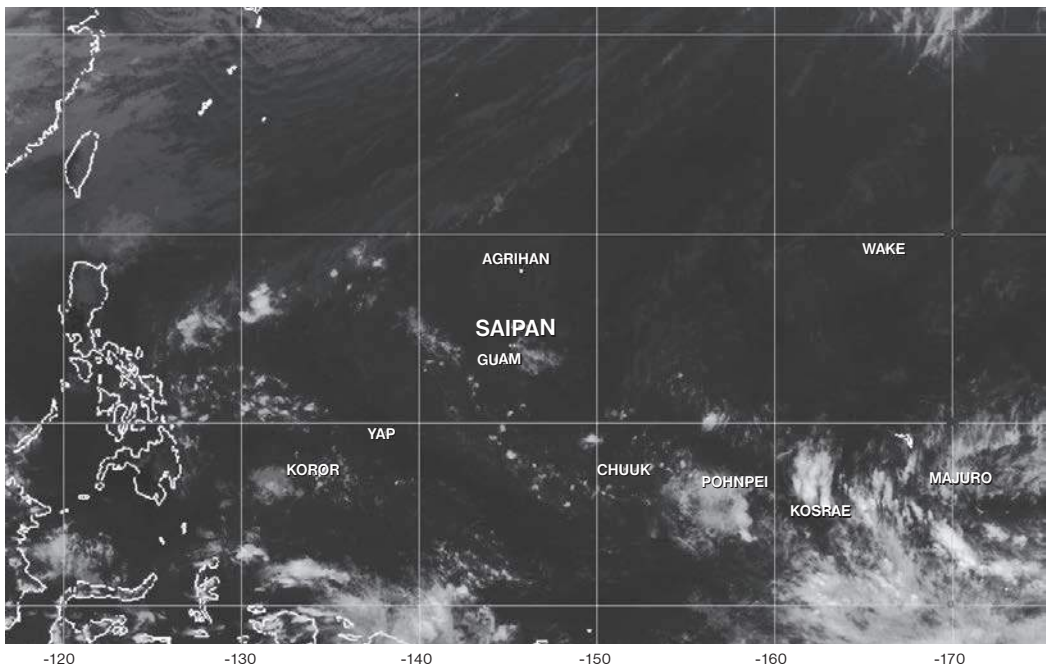
THURSDAY
Partly sunny and breezy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. East winds 20 to 25 mph.
▲86° ▼77°

FRIDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.
▲86° ▼77°

SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼77°

SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼77°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2015
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A near-equatorial trough stretches east-northeastward from 2N130E to a weak circulation centered southwest of Chuuk near 5N148E then turns east-southeastward to end at a tropical disturbance near 2N173E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are present across Palau and Yap state within 100 miles of a line from 6N130E to 7N136E to 2N145E. Scattered to numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring over Chuuk state between 12N and 5N from 146E to 156E. Scattered showers are found over Kosrae state between 10N and 2N from 161E to 167E farther east. Scattered to numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms are located over Majuro between 8N and 1N from 168E to 178E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found north of the Marshall Islands between 15N and 9N from 167E to 175E and east of the Marshall Islands between 12N and 9N from 176E to 180. A frontal boundary extends southwest from 25N142E through 20N130E. Patchy showers are observed southeast of Okinawa along and up to 230 miles northwest of the boundary.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲87	▼79
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲89	▼79
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼78
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼80
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼78
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼80
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼80

Around the Globe

Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	▲69	▼58
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	▲41	▼31
Hong Kong	Rain	▲69	▼63
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼72
London	Mostly Sunny	▲52	▼49
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲82	▼55
Manila	Sunny	▲92	▼75
Melbourne	Sunny	▲81	▼55
Miami	Rain	▲76	▼69
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲50	▼41
Osaka	Sunny	▲60	▼45
Paris	Sunny	▲51	▼39
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	▲60	▼50
Rome	Partly Cloudy	▲61	▼46
Salem	Rain	▲60	▼50
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲63	▼54
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲50	▼35
Tokyo	Sunny	▲55	▼41
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲54	▼38

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

12:21 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.0 Feet
7:00 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
12:19 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
5:40 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:31 AM	5:47 PM
Thursday	6:32 AM	5:47 PM
Friday	6:32 AM	5:47 PM
Saturday	6:33 AM	5:48 PM
Sunday	6:34 AM	5:48 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	4:20 AM	4:11 PM
Thursday	5:10 AM	4:57 PM
Friday	6:02 AM	5:45 PM
Saturday	6:55 AM	6:37 PM
Sunday	7:48 AM	7:31 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 4, 2015

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA2924	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA2922	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA2921	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA2920	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA2928	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA2926	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA2921	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA2921	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:20pm	7:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ628	3:50am	7:40am	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	5:30am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA2924/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA2924/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	1, 2, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2924/183	4:15am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2924/183	4:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:30pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:50pm	1, 4, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA5038/183	2:20pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA5038/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA5072/191	9:50pm	7:20am+1	1, 6 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ628/721	3:50am	12:50am	Daily via ICN
UA2924/159	4:15am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA2922/159	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA2921/159	1:30pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via Rota-GUM
UA2920/159	2:20pm	10:35pm	3, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA2923	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA2925	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA2921	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA2920	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA2927	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA2929	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA2920	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA2920	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:35am	3:10pm	Daily

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
OZ627	9:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily
7C3404	10:10pm	3:30am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA190/2929	9:55am	9:20pm	2, 6, 7 via GUM
UA190/2929	10:00am	9:20pm	3 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ702/627	12:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA2925	10:05pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2925	11:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2920	11:59pm	1:50pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	11:59pm	5:35pm+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2929	11:59pm	9:20pm+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/627	2:20pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
UA116/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA116/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA116/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
6:30AM	6:45AM	Mon, Tue,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

‘CUC employees must not divulge account information’

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. board of directors vice chair Eric San Nicolas declined to respond to allegations that a recent policy change at CUC was intended to benefit himself, while emphasizing that he won’t tolerate CUC personnel divulging customers’ account information.

The issue stems from the new promissory note policy that he proposed and was ultimately approved by a 4-1 vote by the board during their special meeting last month. The new policy now authorizes the Tinian and Rota deputy directors to approve promissory notes for the islands.

San Nicolas, who is from Tinian, allegedly owes CUC in unpaid accounts but he declined to comment on this, instead voicing his concern for CUC employees who may be divulging customer information.

“I am not going to comment on amounts or whatever like that, but if that’s a common practice in CUC [divulging customer information], you better rest assured that I’m going to get to the bottom to make sure that’s addressed,” San Nicolas told *Saipan Tribune*. “I will not tolerate CUC employees divulging personal account information about me as a customer.”

San Nicolas reiterated that the new policy for promissory notes was intended to empower the deputy directors on Tinian and Rota and to better serve the islands’ residents. He also clarified that customer service managers on Saipan still have the authority for promissory notes but only for Saipan.

“Decentralizing certain things in CUC is good for the municipalities because each of the deputy directors down there on Tinian and Rota, they know the people,” San Nicolas. “Why have deputy directors if you can’t entrust them with that responsibility?”

“Even if I’m a customer involved in that same line, so what? I’m a customer,” he added.

San Nicolas said he is going to push for more decentralization in CUC as well as look at the disparity in salaries of CUC employees on the three islands.

“I was appointed to the CUC board of directors to protect the interest of the ratepayers [on] Tinian,” he said. “If I’m going to get criticized and labeled as corrupt for doing that, so be it.”

“If empowering deputy directors on Tinian with the authority that they should have in the beginning is corrupt, then yeah, I’m corrupt,” San Nicolas said. “If listening to my residents on Tinian and listening to their call because one head of household who works minimum wage cannot pay their bill and then after 60 days they get cut off unless they pay 100 percent and they have to sacrifice between food and power, if that is corrupt, then I am corrupt.”

GCA’s 6th to 12th graders haul medals in November meets

Grace Christian Academy’s 6th- to 12th-grade competitors did well in different competitions last November. They won several awards in the second National Junior Speech and Debate Association and National Speech and Debate Association held on Nov. 21, 2015, at Hopwood Junior High School.

GCA’s lone competitor in Senior Thespians, Paula Rose Talibong, also won an award in her event during the Thespian competitions held last Nov. 7, 2015, at Chacha Ocean View Middle School.

These competitions encourage public and private school students to participate in and become proficient in debate, reading, public speaking, interpretations, and theater arts.

The administration, faculty and staff, and parents of Grace Christian Academy are very proud of all of the competitors. Below is the list of all the winners in Junior and Senior high school divisions.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Grace Christian Academy’s National Junior Speech and Debate Association November winners have their picture taken at GCA library.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Grace Christian Academy’s National Speech and Debate Association November winners.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Grace Christian Academy’s Senior Thespian winner Paula Rose Talibong.

NJSDA (6TH-8TH GRADE)

Lincoln Douglas Debate
Hyun In Harry Noh, 3rd Place

Extemporaneous Speech A
Lanz Jabez Victoria, 1st Place
Hyun In Noh, 2nd Place
Arvin Dayao, 3rd Place

Impromptu Speech C
Christy Lee, 1st Place
Martin Pangilinan, 3rd Place

Impromptu Speech D
Hyun In Harry Noh, 1st Place

Impromptu Speech E
Maria Elizabeth Bonto, 1st Place
James Alexander Keaton, 2nd Place
Clerisse Dacumos, 4th Place

Impromptu Speech F
Arvin Dayao, 2nd Place
Tae Yong Kim, 5th Place

Declamation
Maria Elizabeth Bonto, 2nd Place
Joyce Liv Francisco, 3rd Place

Poetry Reading A
Miriella Dilse, 4th Place

Poetry Reading Masters B
Christy Lee, 3rd Place

Poetry Reading Masters C
Tae Yong Kim, 1st Place
Esther Kim, 2nd Place

Prose Reading A
Jimin Woo, 2nd Place
Maria Elizabeth Bonto, 3rd Place
James Alexander Keaton, 4th Place

Prose Reading B
Miriella Dilse, 5th Place

Prose Reading Masters B
Kaydie Claude Aquino, 1st Place
Tae Yong Kim, 3rd Place

Prose Reading Masters C
Christy Lee, 3rd Place

Duo Interpretation B
Jaiden Kayla Sabugo, 5th Place
Miriella Dilse, 5th Place

Duo Interpretation C
Lanz Jabez Victoria, 1st Place
Kaydie Claude Aquino, 1st Place
Angela Kim, 2nd Place
Esther Kim, 2nd Place

NSDA (9TH-12TH GRADE)

Dramatic Interpretation
Yujin Lee, 1st Place

Expository Speech
Minna Ito, 1st Place

Original Oratory
Minna Ito, 2nd Place
Melody Sumin Woo, 4th Place

Poetry Reading Masters A
Yujin Lee, 3rd Place

Prose Reading Masters B
Minna Ito, 2nd Place

Poetry Reading Masters B
Melody Sumin Woo, 2nd Place

Prose Reading Masters A
Yujin Lee, 4th Place

SENIOR THESPIANS (9TH-12TH GRADE)

Solo Musical Theater
Paula Rose Talibong, 4th Place

NJSDA/NSDA coach/ coordinator: Grace Duran
Competition Registrar: Esther Manzano
Competition judges: Miriam Dilse, Daniel Dilse, Laila Portuguez, Rose Talibong

Small craft advisory in effect until Friday

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Guam and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center, fresh to occasionally strong trade winds and combined seas of 8 to 10 feet are expected to produce hazardous conditions for operators of small craft through Thursday. A disturbance passing south of the Marianas could bring isolated thunderstorms Thursday through Friday.

A small craft advisory remains in effect until 6am Friday. East winds of 15 to 25 knots and combined seas of 8 to 10 feet will produce conditions hazardous to small craft.

The general public and mariners, especially inexperienced mariners and those operating smaller vessels, are being advised to avoid boating in these conditions. If travel by boat is necessary, exercise caution especially near reef lines and when entering or leaving harbors and inlets. ***(EOC)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

CCA board meeting on Dec. 15

The Commonwealth Cancer Association’s board of directors will be holding its regular meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 15, 2015, at 3pm at the Commonwealth Cancer Association conference room. Agenda includes reports from the president and program updates. All board meetings are open to the public. For more information, contact the CCA at 682-0050 or email at ccamarianas@gmail.com. ***(CCA)***

Cancer survivors, caregivers support meeting

All people facing cancer, their family members, and caregivers are invited to the next Commonwealth Cancer Association monthly support meeting on Thursday, Dec. 10, 2015, starting at 5:30pm at the Chamolinian Room of the Hyatt Regency Saipan. Guest speaker will be Ms. Monie, a survivor. Topic: “Successful experience for survivors of cancer: How to take care of your health doing backyard gardening.” To RSVP or for more information, call the CCA at 682-0050 or email at ccamarianas@gmail.com or cca@ccamarianas.org. ***(CCA)***

Nominations open for Employer Support Freedom Award

The deadline to submit nominations for the 2016 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is on Dec. 31, 2015. Presented by the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, a Department of Defense office, the Freedom Award is the nation’s highest honor presented to civilian employers for exceptional support of their National Guard and Reserve employees. ESGR encourages Guardsmen, Reservists, or family members acting on their behalf, to submit nominations at www.FreedomAward.mil. The Freedom Award ceremony is held in Washington, D.C., for up to 15 deserving employers each year in August. ***(ESGR)***

Military training at FDM, Warning Area 517

The U.S. military will conduct training at the island of Farallon de Medinilla during the following dates and times:

- Dec. 9-10, from 2pm to 10:30pm
- Dec. 11, from 10:30am to 10pm
- Dec. 12, from 10am to 10pm
- Dec. 13, from 10am to noon

The U.S. Coast Guard will conduct training at Warning Area 517 on Dec. 10-11, from 9am to 4pm

The general public, especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators are advised to stay clear of the areas during the dates and times indicated.

The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla will be on a 10-nautical mile radius on all quadrants.

W-517 is an irregular shaped polygon comprising of 14,000 nautical square miles of airspace that begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest in international waters. This will affect fishing in the vicinity of Santa Rosa Reef and Galvez Bank. ***(JRM)***

Business

Regulators move to stop Staples' deal with Office Depot

NEW YORK (AP)—The Federal Trade Commission said Monday that it is seeking to block the proposed combination of Staples and Office Depot because the deal would reduce competition in the office supplies market. The companies said they plan to fight to preserve the deal.

Shares of the two office supply retailers fell sharply.

The FTC said corporations rely on Staples and Office Depot to buy pens, paper clips and other supplies at low prices. A deal between Staples and Office Depot would cut competition and lead to higher prices, the FTC said. The decision comes 10 months after Staples offered to buy rival Office Depot for $6.3 billion.

Staples and Office Depot said they plan to show that the FTC's decision is based on "a flawed analysis and misunderstanding" of the competitive landscape the companies deal with.

AP

This combination made with 2009 file photos shows signage for a Staples store in Springfield, Ill., top, and an Office Depot store in Miami Springs, Fla.

The pair argue that competition has become even tougher since Office Depot and OfficeMax merged in 2013 and that the FTC is contradicting itself because it said that the office supply market was highly competitive two years ago.

Office Depot Chairman and CEO Roland Smith said Staples and Office Depot plan to pursue legal options in order to complete the deal.

Staples is based in Framingham, Massachusetts, while Office Depot is based in Boca Raton, Florida.

Shares of Staples Inc. fell $1.70, or 14 percent, to close at $10.66 Monday. Shares of Office Depot Inc. fell $1.05, or 16 percent, to close at $5.59.

Oil price drops to lowest since 2009, sinking energy stocks

NEW YORK (AP)—A sharp drop in the price of oil on Monday rattled investors and helped push stocks lower across several industries.

Investors sold from the start of trading following a decision by OPEC last week not to cut production. Benchmark U.S. crude dropped nearly 6 percent, deepening its stunning 1Ω year plunge, to close at its lowest level in nearly seven years. The losses were broad, with seven of the 10 industry sectors in the Standard & Poor's 500 index closing lower.

As they have all year, oil drillers bore the brunt of the selling. Chevron and Exxon Mobil, both members of the 30-stock Dow Jones industrial average, each fell nearly 3 percent.

"There was a big hope that OPEC would announce a production cut, but it just didn't happen," said Mizuho Securities Chief Economist Steven Ricchiuto. He added: "The whole world is facing excess supply as the global economy slows."

The Dow gave up 117.12 points, or 0.7 percent, to 17,730.51. The S&P 500 fell 14.62 points, or 0.7 percent, to 2,077.07. The Nasdaq composite dropped 40.46 points, or 0.8 percent, to 5,101.81.

Airlines stocks were among the winners as investors anticipated bigger profits thanks to falling fuel costs. JetBlue Airways jumped $1.01, or 4 percent, to $26.49. Delta Air Lines also rose 4 percent, gaining $2 to close at $51.78.

In theory, lower oil prices should help many stocks because consumers often spend money elsewhere that they save at the pump or on heating bills. But investors have been disappointed.

"Retailers have been waiting for the pump-price dividend to filter into their stores, but for the most part we're not seeing it," said Jack Ablin, chief investment officer at BMO Private Bank.

Meanwhile, the shift in the U.S. to producing more oil has made the stock market more vulnerable to price swings in the commodity

In each of the past three quarters, as oil prices have tanked, earnings per share for energy companies in the S&P 500 have dropped more than 50 percent, according to S&P Capital IQ, a financial data provider. After Monday's drop, their stocks are down 22 percent since the start of the year.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Japan avoids recession, revised growth at 1 percent

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's economy grew at an annual 1.0 percent pace in the July to September quarter, according to revised data that indicates the country dodged a recession. Earlier estimates had shown growth for the world's third-largest economy at minus 0.8 percent, the second straight quarter of contraction. Two consecutive quarters of contraction are considered a technical recession. The revised growth estimate issued Tuesday shows stronger corporate investment and a slightly higher pace of growth in exports than earlier reported. On a quarterly basis the economy expanded 0.3 percent from the previous quarter instead of contracting 0.2 percent as the earlier estimate showed.

PIMCO hires Bernanke, Jean Claude-Trichet to advisory board

NEW YORK (AP)—Fund giant PIMCO has named former heads of two of the world's biggest central banks to its advisory board, tapping Former Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke and former European Central Bank President Jean-Claude Trichet. Bernanke, who already served as a senior adviser to PIMCO, will lead the board, the firm said. The other members of the board will include former U.K. Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Ng Kok Song, who led one of Singapore's sovereign wealth funds, and Princeton professor Anne-Marie Slaughter. PIMCO has a history of hiring former Fed officials after they've left public office. The firm hired Alan Greenspan, the Fed chairman before Bernanke, in 2007 to provide economic advice.

GE scraps $3.3 billion appliance unit sale to Electrolux

GE has scrapped a $3.3 billion plan to sell its home appliance business to the Swedish company Electrolux, a deal opposed by U.S. regulators over concerns about competition. The Fairfield, Connecticut, conglomerate said that it will continue to run the business as it looks for other options to sell it. General Electric Co. offered no reason for its decision in a brief statement released Monday. Electrolux is the world's second-biggest home appliance maker after U.S. rival Whirlpool. It sells most of its products in the U.S. under the Frigidaire brand. The U.S. Department of Justice had sued to stop the deal in July, saying the deal would have eliminated a major competitor and left Electrolux and Whirlpool as the only big companies in the U.S. selling cooking appliances such as ovens and ranges. ***(AP)***

Cheaper oil buoys consumers, hammers producers

DALLAS (AP)—Oil prices have been lower for longer than expected. Now, with OPEC's decision to keep pumping at current levels, analysts expect oil to remain relatively cheap well into 2016 and maybe longer.

That, of course, is good news for consumers and fuel-guzzling industries like airlines, but oil producers are being squeezed and thousands of workers in the oil patch have been laid off.

The price of a barrel of oil fell Monday to $37.65, a nearly seven-year low. Energy stocks, from giants Exxon and Chevron down to independent producers, took a beating.

What's causing the upheaval? Simply put, supply and demand are out of synch, and that's causing ripples across economies, creating winners and losers.

ROBUST SUPPLY, SO-SO DEMAND

U.S. oil production rose from 5 million barrels a day in 2008 to an estimated 9.3 million barrels a day in 2015. That unexpected surge, coupled with OPEC's unwillingness to cut production, left the world awash in oil and sank prices. Supply is outpacing demand by about 1.4 million barrels a day, according to Judith Dwarkin, chief economist at ITG Investment Research.

Meanwhile, economic growth has been slower than expected, undercutting demand for energy. China's economy has slowed, Japan is in recession, and Europe continues to struggle. The U.S. economy is growing, but more-efficient cars have blunted the need for more fuel.

The U.S. government predicts U.S. production will drop 6 percent next year as oil companies curtail unprofitable projects. Globally, "it could take well into 2017 to work off the surplus inventory," Dwarkin said.

HEYDAY FOR CONSUMERS

Motorists see the effect of cheaper crude every time they fill up. According to AAA, the national average price for a gallon of regular gasoline on Monday was $2.03 and should soon drop below $2 for the first time since 2009. Gas is already below $2 at nearly two-thirds of the nation's 130,000 gas stations, according to the price-watching site GasBuddy.com. A gallon of diesel is more than $1 cheaper than at this time last year, benefiting shippers.

Tom Kloza, chief oil analyst for Oil Price Information Service, says the nationwide average could drop as low as $1.75, before turning around in the spring, possibly going as high as $2.75 in time for driving season.

All that pocket change and low interest rates are leading many consumers to splurge on new cars, particularly bigger ones. SUV sales have jumped 45 percent since November 2012, when gas was around $3.63 a gallon. But car-buying in key oil states has tailed off, according to IHS Automotive. New vehicle registrations in Texas and North Dakota rose just slightly this year through September, after outpacing the nationwide growth in the boom oil years.

Saving on gasoline could improve shoppers' holiday spirit. Cheaper gas "frees up money that could be spent elsewhere, so that's a plus for holiday shopping," said Scott Hoyt, senior director of consumer economics at Moody's Analytics.

Cheap oil also translates to lower heating bills. The average household using heating oil will spend $1,360 this year, $493 less than last winter, according to the EIA.

Big airlines such as American, United and Delta burn billions of gallons of jet fuel every year, and savings from cheaper fuel are helping them post record profits. Thanks to cheaper fuel, travelers are seeing a slight drop in average airfares after five straight years of fares rising faster than inflation.

PRODUCERS FEEL THE PAIN

Oil companies, their employees, and their subcontractors are feeling the pinch from lower prices. Profits are down at the majors such as Exxon Mobil Corp. and Chevron Corp., but independents are suffering more.

Nation

California's newest airport terminal extends to Mexico

SAN DIEGO (AP)—The U.S.-Mexico border is one of the world's most fortified international divides. Starting Wednesday, it will also be one of the world's only boundaries with an airport straddling two countries.

An investor group that includes Chicago billionaire Sam Zell built a sleek terminal in San Diego with a bridge that crosses a razor-wire border fence to Tijuana's decades-old airport. Passengers pay $18 to walk a 390-foot overpass to Tijuana International Airport, a springboard to about 30 Mexican destinations.

The terminal is targeting the estimated 60 percent of Tijuana airport passengers who cross into the United States, about 2.6 million travelers last year. Now, they drive about 15 minutes to a congested land crossing, where they sometimes wait several hours to enter San Diego by car or on foot. The airport bridge is a five-minute walk to a U.S. border inspector.

"It seems so much easier, so liberating," said Daniela Calderon, who flies from Tijuana four times a year to visit family in the central Mexican city of Morelia and has a friend drive her across the border from Riverside, California.

AP
In this Wednesday, Nov. 25, 2015 photo taken in Tijuana, Mexico, vehicles pass under a walking bridge that connects the new Cross Border Xpress air terminal in San Diego, right, to the Tijuana International Airport, left. The new terminal is scheduled to begin operations on Wednesday, Dec. 9.

The only other cross-border airport known to industry experts is in the European Union—between Basel, Switzerland, and France's Upper Rhine region—but it carries none of the political freight of San Diego and Tijuana. Mexicans who ran across the border illegally overwhelmed the Border Patrol until the mid-1990s, when new fences and additional agents heralded a massive surge in U.S. enforcement on the 1,954-mile line with Mexico.

Cross Border Xpress, one of the largest privately-operated U.S. air terminals, wouldn't have happened if Tijuana didn't build its airport a few steps from the international line in the 1950s or if it wasn't surrounded by undeveloped land in a barren, industrial part of San Diego.

"It's an amazing accident of geography," said Stanis Smith of Stantec Inc., the terminal's architect. "It could never happen again."

The terminal is one of the last works by the late Ricardo Legorreta, whose bold colors helped bring Mexican modernism to a world stage and attracted a strong following in the American Southwest. The stone exterior mixes purple stucco and red limestone that takes on a deep, inky hue when it rains. Stone gardens sprout agave and other desert plants.

FBI: Killers had been radicalized 'for quite some time'

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. (AP)—The San Bernardino killers had been radicalized "for quite some time" and had taken target practice at area gun ranges, in one instance just days before the attack that left 14 people dead, the FBI said Monday.

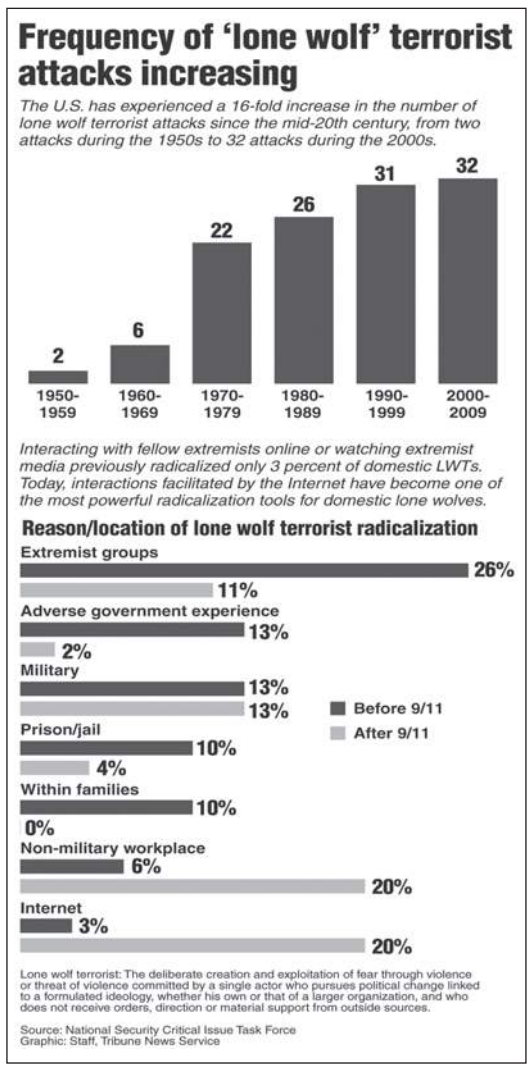
In a chilling twist, authorities also disclosed that a year before the rampage, Syed Farook's co-workers at the county health department underwent "active shooter" training in the same conference room where he and his wife opened fire on them last week.

It was not immediately clear whether Farook attended the late-2014 session on what to do when a gunman invades the workplace, San Bernardino County spokeswoman Felisa Cardona said.

Two employees who survived the attack said colleagues reacted Wednesday by trying to do as they had been trained—dropping under the tables and staying quiet so as not to attract attention.

"Unfortunately, the room just didn't provide a whole lot of protection," said Corwin Porter, assistant county health director.

Farook, a 28-year-old restaurant inspector born in the U.S. to a Pakistani family, and Tashfeen Malik, a 29-year-old immigrant from Pakistan, went on the rampage at a holiday luncheon at about the same time Malik pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group on Facebook, authorities said. The Muslim couple were killed hours later in a gunbattle with police.


Frequency of 'lone wolf' terrorist attacks increasing
The U.S. has experienced a 16-fold increase in the number of lone wolf terrorist attacks since the mid-20th century, from two attacks during the 1950s to 32 attacks during the 2000s.
2
6
22
26
31
32
1950-1959
1960-1969
1970-1979
1980-1989
1990-1999
2000-2009
Interacting with fellow extremists online or watching extremist media previously radicalized only 3 percent of domestic LWTs. Today, interactions facilitated by the Internet have become one of the most powerful radicalization tools for domestic lone wolves.
Reason/location of lone wolf terrorist radicalization
Extremist groups
26%
11%
Adverse government experience
13%
2%
Military
13%
13%
Prison/jail
10%
4%
Within families
10%
0%
Non-military workplace
6%
20%
Internet
3%
20%
Before 9/11
After 9/11
Lone wolf terrorist: The deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or threat of violence committed by a single actor who pursues political change linked to a formulated ideology, whether his own or that of a larger organization, and who does not receive orders, direction or material support from outside sources.
Source: National Security Critical Issue Task Force
Graphic: Staff, Tribune News Service

"We have learned and believe that both subjects were radicalized and have been for quite some time," said David Bowdich, chief of the FBI's Los Angeles office.

He added: "The question we're trying to get at is how did that happen and by whom and where did that happen? And I will tell you right now we don't know those answers."

He also said the couple had taken target practice at ranges in the Los Angeles metropolitan area, with one session held within days of the rampage.

John Galletta, an instructor at Riverside Magnum Range, said in a statement that Farook had been there Nov. 29 and 30, two days before the attack, and "nothing was out of the ordinary regarding his behavior."

Galletta told reporters that he never spoke to Farook and that no one had seen Farook's wife around there.

Asked whether in hindsight he or others at the range should have been suspicious of Farook, Galletta said: "How are you able to determine what somebody's intents are?"

Responding to mistrust, feds investigate Chicago police

CHICAGO (AP)—Responding to deepening mistrust of one of the nation's largest police forces, the federal government opened an investigation Monday into the Chicago Police Department, and authorities announced they would not charge an officer in the death of a 25-year-old black man who was shot in the back last year.

The Justice Department investigation was to look into patterns of racial disparity in the use of force. It comes nearly two weeks after the release of a video showing a white Chicago police officer shooting a black teenager 16 times.

Lack of trust between police and their communities, "makes it more difficult to gain help within investigations, to encourage the victims and the witnesses of crime to speak up and to fulfill the most basic responsibilities of public-safety officials," Attorney General Loretta Lynch said. "And when suspicion and hostility is allowed to fester, it can erupt into unrest."

The investigation, which is separate from an existing federal investigation into last year's shooting death of 17-year-old Laquan McDonald, will also review how the department disciplines officers and handles misconduct accusations. Justice Department officials say they use so-called patterns-and-practices probes to identify systemic failings in troubled police departments and to improve trust between police and the communities they serve.

The civil-rights investigation follows recent ones in Baltimore and Ferguson, Missouri, and comes as the police department and Mayor Rahm Emanuel are under intense scrutiny over their handling of the October 2014 death of McDonald. Officer Jason Van Dyke was charged with first-degree murder Nov. 24, more than a year after the killing and just hours before the release of police dashboard camera footage showing the officer shooting the teenager.

Emanuel, who initially said a federal civil rights investigation would be "misguided" but later reversed course, said the city needs comprehensive solutions in the wake of the video showing McDonald's death.

Speaking at a news conference, Emanuel said the police department's challenges go beyond one case and he's making several reforms, including appointing a new leader for the Independent Police Review Authority, which investigates shootings by police. The previous head resigned Sunday.

Cabinet secretary urges US to avoid suspicion of Muslims

WASHINGTON (AP)—Vilifying and casting suspicion on American Muslims would threaten counterterrorism efforts and is un-American, the Homeland Security secretary said Monday at the nation's second-largest mosque, as Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump proposed banning all Muslims from entering the U.S.

Secretary Jeh Johnson, after asking Muslims to report anyone in their communities suspected of turning toward violence, declined to respond directly to Trump's proposal. Trump announced his idea during Johnson's meeting.

"I don't comment on what candidates for office say during this political season," Johnson said afterward. He would not otherwise answer questions about Trump's comments.

Johnson was participating Monday in a round-table discussion on civil rights and liberties at the All Dulles Area Muslim Society Center in Sterling, Virginia. He said the U.S. government needs to take a new approach to counterterrorism and homeland security that includes outreach to Muslim communities.

"Terrorist organizations overseas have targeted your communities. They seek to pull your youth into the pit of violent extremism. Help us to help you stop this," Johnson said. "If you see someone turning toward violence, say something. Say something to law enforcement, or to one of your community or religious leaders. When people self-radicalize, someone close to them is almost always in a position to see the signs."

Johnson said, "Over and over again, in the life of this nation, there have been classes of people who, by virtue of their race, religion or nationality, exist on the margins of society, who are the object of prejudice, scorn and suspicion, and seek to win acceptance"

The discussion came on the heels of President Obama's address to the nation Sunday about last week's shooting attack in San Bernardino, California, which the FBI is investigating as an act of terrorism. Obama also vowed to destroy the Islamic State group.

Asia

Chinese parents go to court seeking to register 2nd children

BEIJING (AP)—Wan Changru's 6-year-old daughter collects passes—for her dance school, English lessons and other extra-curricular classes, anything bearing her name that she can pretend is an identity card.

The girl is legally unregistered because her parents broke China's one-child policy in having her. They say they cannot afford to pay a 200,000 yuan ($30,000) fine that would allow her to gain legal status. Without it, she can't visit a hospital or get on a plane to go on holiday to Disneyland like her friends.

With the government's announcement in October that it would allow all married couples to have two children, Wan and her husband have decided to take family planning officials to court to try to get her registered without paying the fine.

Wan's daughter is one of nearly 14 million unregistered people across China, most a legacy of China's 35-year strict family planning policy that limited most urban couples to one child, though rural couples were allowed to have two if their first was a girl.

AP

In this Saturday, Nov. 14, 2015 photo provided by a demonstrator who wished to remain anonymous, demonstrators urging the Chinese government to recognize unregistered children are stopped by policemen along the side of a road near Tiananmen Square in Beijing.

Those who are unregistered lack a "hukou" (pronounced HOO-koh)—a household registration entry in a small family book and on a police computer system. Without a hukou, a person has limited access to health care, education and other benefits, and cannot get a permanent ID card.

"Now that the country has relaxed the one-child policy, I think it's time for us to call upon the public to realize that there are still a large number of marginalized people in China who have no hukou," said Wan, a 42-year-old housewife.

The Ministry of Public Security said last month every citizen has the right to a hukou and efforts should be made to register those without one. It gave no details on how, and no official has so far publicly backed any amnesty for fines, which vary from city to city.

The hukou system predates the one-child policy, which perpetuates inequalities not only between registered and unregistered Chinese, but between urban and rural residents.

"The one-child is just a policy that can be quite easily changed, like China has just done, while the hukou is a much larger institution," said Kam Wing Chan, a geography professor at the University of Washington who researches the hukou system. "It has been around for almost 60 years now. It has all kinds of impact. It's dividing China socially, economically."

China's ruling Communist Party initiated the household registration system in the 1950s to control the movement of people. It ties them to their family's hometown and the subsidized health and education services available in that area. Changing one's hukou can be difficult, particularly shifting residence to big cities like Beijing and Shanghai where many migrants want to work.

The system has barely changed even as millions of people have moved from the countryside to cities. Big-city governments have balked at the costs of delivering education and health care to migrant workers and their children, an estimated 253 million people—almost a fifth of China's population.

California shooter attended Islamic school in Pakistan

MULTAN, Pakistan (AP)—The woman who carried out last week's mass shooting in California with her husband had attended an Islamic religious school, or madrassa, while living in Pakistan, intelligence officials and the school said Monday.

Few details have emerged about Tashfeen Malik's life in Pakistan, where she lived from 2007 to 2014 before heading to the United States on a fiancee visa. Malik studied pharmacy at the Bahauddin Zakariya University in the central city of Multan, where she got a degree in 2013.

She also took classes at the Multan branch of Al-Huda International Seminary, a women-only madrassa with branches across Pakistan and in the U.S. and Canada. The school has no known links to extremists, and in Pakistan it is popular among upper-middle class and urban women.

The region where the school is located, however, is home to thousands of extremist seminaries, with hundreds linked to al-Qaida and the Pakistani Taliban. Pakistan, which supports Islamic militants battling archrival India in the disputed region of Kashmir and is widely believed to have ties to insurgents in Afghanistan, has long turned a blind eye to institutions that teach radical interpretations of Islam.

Al-Huda said in a statement that it has no links to any "extremist regime" and seeks to promote a "peaceful message of Islam and denounce extremism, violence and acts of terrorism."

It said Malik studied at the Multan branch for a brief period between 2013 and 2014 and left without completing the diploma course. "It seems that she was unable to understand the beautiful message of the Quran. We cannot be held responsible for personal acts of any of our students," the statement said.

Malik spent more than a year at Al-Huda, taking classes six days a week, the school's spokeswoman Farrukh Chaudhry told The Associated Press.

She enrolled in a two-year course to study the Quran, its translation and interpretation, but did not finish the course, Chaudhry added. Malik was a student there from April 17, 2013 until May 3, 2014, when she handed in her last paper in the first-year curriculum, the spokeswoman said.

"She told us that she was going to get married in two months, and after that she will leave for America." Chaudhry said by phone from the southern port city of Karachi, where she is based.

Malik promised to complete her studies by mail correspondence, but that never happened, Chaudhry said.

"I have talked to her teachers, her classmates, and everybody says she was a hardworking, friendly, helpful and obedient student," Chaudhry said, adding that "no one ever noticed any signs of radicalization."

IAEA chief: Interest in nuclear power up despite Fukushima

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Despite the Fukushima nuclear disaster that devastated northeastern Japan in 2011, interest in nuclear power has increased significantly, mainly in Asia, the U.N. nuclear watchdog chief said Monday.

International Atomic Energy Agency chief Yukiya Amano said the appetite for nuclear power has grown in Asia because of the need to fuel the region's bustling economies and demand for relatively clean energy amid concerns about climate change.

Globally, at least 30 developing countries are seriously considering the use of nuclear power, Amano said, adding that more than 440 nuclear power plants are currently operated worldwide.

"After the Fukushima Daichi accident, some believed that is the end of nuclear power. It was not the case," Amano told a news conference in Manila, where he attended a conference and discussed with Philippine officials how to harness nuclear technology for economic progress.

"Nuclear power plants or use of nuclear power is increasing significantly," he said.

The meltdowns at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant in northeastern Japan following an earthquake and tsunami displaced more than 100,000 people due to radioactive contamination and spurred a national debate over resource-scarce Japan's reliance on nuclear power.

The plant "was not well prepared for the severe natural hazard," Amano said. Following the disaster, Amano said he visited nuclear plants in several countries and saw that considerable safeguards had been introduced.

"After Fukushima, lots of improvements have been made," he said.

Each government, he said, ultimately has to decide whether to embrace nuclear energy for power generation based on many factors, including the availability of other options like hydropower.

Japan remains committed to nuclear power despite the meltdowns at Fukushima. Only two of the country's 43 workable reactors are currently online, with the others shut down pending safety checks, but the government wants to restart as many as possible.

To offset the shortfall in power output, Japan ramped up imports of oil and gas and fired up more thermal power plants, slowing progress toward reducing its emissions of greenhouse gases.

Countries, meanwhile, need to ensure the security of nuclear power plants and materials amid terrorism threats, Amano said, adding that the IAEA has provided training and other assistance to help governments deal with such concerns.

"If nuclear materials fall into the hands of terrorists, that can be used for dirty bombs," he said. "If it happens in a big city, that can cause a panic."

"Terrorists always target the weakest link, so we need to be well prepared for that to address nuclear security," he said.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Beijing schools close as city issues 1st smog red alert

BEIJING (AP)—Schools closed and rush-hour roads were much quieter than normal as Beijing invoked its first-ever red alert for smog Tuesday, closing many factories and imposing restrictions to keep half the city's vehicles off the roads. The alert in effect through Thursday—the most serious warning on a four-tier system adopted in 2013—means authorities have forecast more than three consecutive days of severe smog. Despite some improvement in Beijing's air over the past year, readings of dangerous particles Tuesday were as high as a dozen times the safe level, in what has become an embarrassment for a government that has made a priority of cleaning up the legacy of pollution left from years of full-tilt economic growth.

Powerful earthquake shakes Tajikistan

BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan (AP)—A powerful earthquake has shaken Tajikistan, sending shockwaves to other Central Asian nations, but no casualties or damages have been reported immediately. Authorities in Tajikistan nor in Kyrgyzstan would immediately comment on the possible damage. The U.S. Geographical Survey said the epicenter of the 7.2 point earthquake was located in the east of Tajikistan, 120 kilometers (75 miles) from the nearest village. An Associated Press reporter in neighboring Kyrgyzstan, south of Tajikistan, felt two tremors in the capital Bishkek within an hour before 11 a.m. local time. Authorities in Kazakhstan reported tremors in the country's largest city Almaty as well.

Thai army blocks anti-corruption protest, detains activists

BANGKOK (AP)—Thailand's military government blocked an anti-corruption protest Monday, detaining about three dozen students and other activists who were headed to a park honoring past kings that was allegedly built with money from shady dealings involving several senior officers. The military's efforts to quash the protest included detaching the railway car on which the protesters were traveling to Rajabhakti Park, near the seaside town of Hua Hin, before taking them into custody. Officials abruptly announced that the park, on army land, was closed for the day for renovations. The detainees were all released by Monday night, according to Thai Lawyers for Human Rights, a group that has been monitoring the situation. Most but not all signed a memorandum of understanding, it said. It has become a standard procedure for detainees to be asked to sign a statement acknowledging their liability if they run afoul of the junta's protest regulations again.

World

Muslims around world decry Trump's proposal to keep them out

U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump has called for a "total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States," immigrants and visitors alike, because of what he describes as hatred among "large segments of the Muslim population" toward Americans. The Associated Press is asking Muslims in other countries for their thoughts on his proposal:

■■■

SOMCHAI JEWANGMA, an officer with Thailand's Sheikhul Islam Office:

"I don't think that can ever be done. The United States has economic ties with Islamic countries and there are millions of Muslim people in America. This is just a policy to please those who don't like Muslims and to gain more support.

"It's true that there are Muslim extremists, those who don't have good intentions for Islam. But there are 1.7 billion Muslim people in the world. If we were all bad, then the world would be uninhabitable."

Somchai also said entry rules already have become stricter: "When I applied for a U.S. visa, I was inspected for months."

■■■

AZRA KHAN, president of the Canberra Islamic Center in Australia, said Trump's proposal is the wrong way to address last week's attack in San Bernardino, California, in which a Muslim couple killed 14 people:

"Clearly Donald Trump is trying to inflame the situation. Clearly this tragedy is not about Muslims.

"He could better improve the situation if he were to say, 'Let the U.S. take guns more seriously and ban them.' That one simple solution would be much more suitable and make the streets of America far safer."

■■■

IKEBAL PATEL, former president of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils:

"He's trying to alienate not only the Muslim population of the United States but all the Muslims around the world.

"Nobody in their right mind would in any way condone what has just happened with those two individuals in that town, but to condemn in one fell swoop all the Muslims and to try to suggest that Muslims shouldn't be allowed in America is quite ridiculous."

■■■

MANOON HAYEEMOHLOR, a university student from Pattani, Thailand:

"I feel so bad. Why would he say he will shut Muslims out? It's not like all Muslims are bad.

"If this (shutdown of Muslims) ever goes through, I think the Middle East would close themselves from Americans as well. If they do that, it would affect the U.S. as well.

"When Muslim people go to America, we actually contribute to the country's GDP."

■■■

NUR JAZLAN MOHAMAD, Malaysian deputy home minister, said the proposal is not aligned with America's image as tolerant and democratic, and could play into the Islamic State group's hands by alienating Muslims who are already in the U.S.:

"His proposal reflects the thinking of many people in America, and this is worrying."

AP

Republican presidential candidate, businessman Donald Trump, speaks during a rally coinciding with Pearl Harbor Day at Patriots Point aboard the aircraft carrier USS Yorktown in Mt. Pleasant, S.C., Monday, Dec. 7, 2015.

US, other powers want end of UN Iran nuke probe

VIENNA (AP)—Once a vociferous critic of Iran's alleged work on nuclear arms, the U.S. is now joining five other world powers in urging the U.N. atomic agency to close the books on a protracted probe of the claims, according to a document obtained by The Associated Press.

The call is contained in a confidential draft resolution prepared for next week's meeting of the 35-nation board of the International Atomic Energy Agency and shared Monday with all of those member nations.

The push by the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany to end the investigation is being launched despite a report last week from IAEA chief Yukiya Amano concluding that Tehran did work related to nuclear arms up to 2009. And it comes after a near decade of heated U.S. accusations of such Iranian activities—charges Tehran denies.

But the call for closure makes sense as the six move from focusing on past activities that will likely forever remain murky and push for enactment of a July 14 deal with Iran mandating enforceable future constraints on nuclear technologies that Tehran could use to make such weapons.

The board must formally agree to end the probe and the resolution from the U.S. and its five partners is meant to achieve that aim.

Past board meetings urged the IAEA to continue its investigation of the allegations. This time, the resolution to be put forward for adoption by the board on Dec. 15 specifies that "the board's consideration" of the allegations will be closed because Iran met specific deadlines in cooperating with the IAEA for it to be able to wrap up its investigations by this month.

Although the tone of request to end the probe is dispassionate, Western diplomats familiar with the drafting of the document said some statements at the board meeting will be critical of what the U.S. and its allies continue to say were Iranian attempts to develop nuclear arms.

At the same time, they said, the language in the resolution had to be neutral and acceptable to the Iranians in order to be able to advance early next year to implementing the July 14 deal that promises sanctions relief for Iran in exchange for cuts in its nuclear programs.

The diplomats demanded anonymity because they are not authorized to discuss the diplomacy leading up to the meeting.

The rest of the three-page draft deals with the IAEA's role in monitoring Iran's commitments in that deal and specifies that the board will move from pressuring Iran on its nuclear program to monitoring its compliance with the July 14 agreement.

Study sees possible dip in world carbon dioxide emissions

PARIS (AP)—Global carbon dioxide emissions may be dropping ever so slightly this year, spurred by a dramatic plunge in Chinese pollution, according to a surprising new study released Monday.

The unexpected dip could either be a temporary blip or true hope that the world is about to turn the corner on carbon pollution as climate talks continue in Paris, said the study's authors, a scientific team that regularly tracks heat-trapping pollution.

One skeptical scientist offered a $10,000 bet that world emissions will keep rising despite the findings, which were published on the same day that Beijing issued its first ever red alert for smog, urging schools to close and invoking restrictions on factories and traffic.

Still, some leaders cheered the study, published in the journal Nature Climate Change.

"That shouldn't tell us we don't need to do anything, but that shows there is action," Janos Pasztor, the United Nations assistant secretary general for climate change, told The Associated Press. "Things are going in the right direction. All we need is a strong agreement."

Using preliminary data through October 2015, the international team of emission trackers project that worldwide emissions of carbon dioxide this year will be down by 200 million metric tons (220 million tons). Last year, the world pumped an estimated 35.9 billion metric tons (39.6 billion tons) into the air by burning coal, oil and gas, along with making cement.

Still, the change is so small—0.6 percent—that it may not be a decrease at all because of the margin of error. As a result, the change could range from a slight increase of 0.5 percent to a decrease of as much as 1.6 percent.

If it is indeed a decrease, however, study authors said this would be the first time global carbon dioxide emissions have dropped, even if only slightly, while the world economy grows. Global emissions fell during the last big recession.

While total emissions have been climbing, the rate of increase has slowed in recent years. Still, this year's figures could be a blip, with emissions going right back up, said study co-author Corinne Le Quere of the University of East Anglia.

"We have a mountain (of emissions) in front of us," Le Quere said. "Maybe the mountain is a bit less and steep than we thought. But it's still a mountain."

U.S. Environmental Protection Administrator Gina McCarthy said: "I will take the blip any day; it's much better than saying it's increasing. But I think it may just represent a strategy that will be more long term."

Amnesty: Most weapons used by IS were seized from Iraqi army

BEIRUT (AP)—Decades of reckless arms trading and the poorly regulated flow of weapons into Iraq have contributed to the Islamic State group's accumulation of a "vast and varied" arsenal which is being used to commit war crimes on a massive scale in Iraq and Syria, an international rights group said Tuesday.

Amnesty International's report, based on expert analysis of verified videos and images, says most of the extremist group's weapons, ammunition and equipment were looted from the Iraqi army. It says the weapons were manufactured and designed in more than two dozen countries, including Russia, China, the U.S. and EU states.

IS swept across Iraq in the summer of 2014, capturing the second largest city, Mosul, and taking weapons left behind by fleeing Iraqi security forces, including U.S.-supplied arms and military vehicles. The extremist group has also snatched arms from Syrian forces after capturing military bases there.

"The vast and varied weaponry being used by the armed group calling itself Islamic State is a textbook case of how reckless arms trading fuels atrocities on a massive scale," said Amnesty researcher Patrick Wilcken.

"Poor regulation and lack of oversight of the immense arms flows into Iraq going back decades have given IS and other armed groups a bonanza of unprecedented access to firepower," he said.

The rights group said the weapons have allowed IS to carry out a "horrific campaign of abuse," including "summary killings, rape, torture, abduction and hostage-taking -- often carried out at gunpoint."

IS has proudly posted videos showing its fighters beheading journalists, captured soldiers, Syrian rebels and alleged spies. IS militants have also forced women and girls from Iraq's Yazidi religious minority into sex slavery.

Amnesty said the range and scope of the group's arsenal reflects decades of "irresponsible" arms transfers to Iraq. It also faulted a lack of oversight following the 2003 invasion, when the United State spent billions of dollars arming and training Iraqi security forces. "Lax controls over military stockpiles and endemic corruption by successive Iraqi governments have added to the problem," it said.

The report documents the extremists' use of arms and ammunition from at least 25 countries. Among the advanced weaponry in the IS arsenal are man-portable air defense systems, or MANPADS, guided anti-tank missiles and armored fighting vehicles.

It said most of the conventional weapons being used by IS fighters date from the 1970s to the 1990s, when Iraq was engaged in a massive military buildup ahead of and during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war.

Iraq was placed under a U.N. arms embargo after Saddam Hussein's troops invade Kuwait in 1990, but that was lifted after the U.S.-led invasion. By 2014, Washington had delivered more than $500 million worth of small arms and ammunition to the Iraqi government, Amnesty said.

Amnesty International called on all states to adopt "a complete embargo" on Syrian government forces and armed opposition groups "implicated in committing war crimes." It said any state transferring arms to Iraq should invest heavily in controls, training and monitoring in order to meet international standards.

Focus

Apple Maps, once a laughingstock, now dominates iPhones

NEW YORK (AP)—Apple Maps quickly became the butt of jokes when it debuted in 2012. It overlooked many towns and businesses and misplaced famous landmarks. It marked New York's Madison Square Garden arena as park space because of the word "Garden." The service was a rare blunder for a company known for simple, easy-to-use products.

It's a different story three years later.

Apple fixed errors as users submitted them. It quietly bought several mapping companies, mostly for their engineers and other talent. This fall, it added transit directions for several major cities, narrowing a major gap with Google. Apple Maps is now used more widely than Google Maps on iPhones.

"They really did a great job in a short amount of time," said Alex Mackenzie-Torres, a former Google Maps manager who's now with competing transit app Moovit. "Apple has something that few companies have—simplicity in design mixed with high doses of pragmatism and practicality."

Apple's significant investment in fixing Maps underscores how important maps and related services are to tech companies. Location is key to helping phone users find restaurants and shops, discover things to do and just get around. It's also big business, as app makers tap into the core mapping functions of phones to direct people in helpful ways and sometimes offer them bargains based on where they're standing.

The quick turnaround also demonstrates how easily companies like Apple can steer people to their own services. Google Maps and various third-party apps offer many features that Apple Maps lacks, yet Apple cleverly turned user inertia to its advantage. Many people use Apple Maps just because it comes with the phone. Even if you've taken the trouble to download a competing app, other iPhone services such as Siri and Mail will invariably take you to Apple Maps.

Without the ability to steer users this way, Apple "would not be in the position they are in," IDC analyst John Jackson said. "Not that they aren't improving the experience, but this helps the cause."

Apple says its mapping service is now used more than three times as often as its next leading competitor on iPhones and iPads, with more than 5 billion map-related requests each week. Research firm comScore says Apple has a modest lead over Google on iPhones in the U.S., though comScore measures how many people use a service in a given month rather than how often.

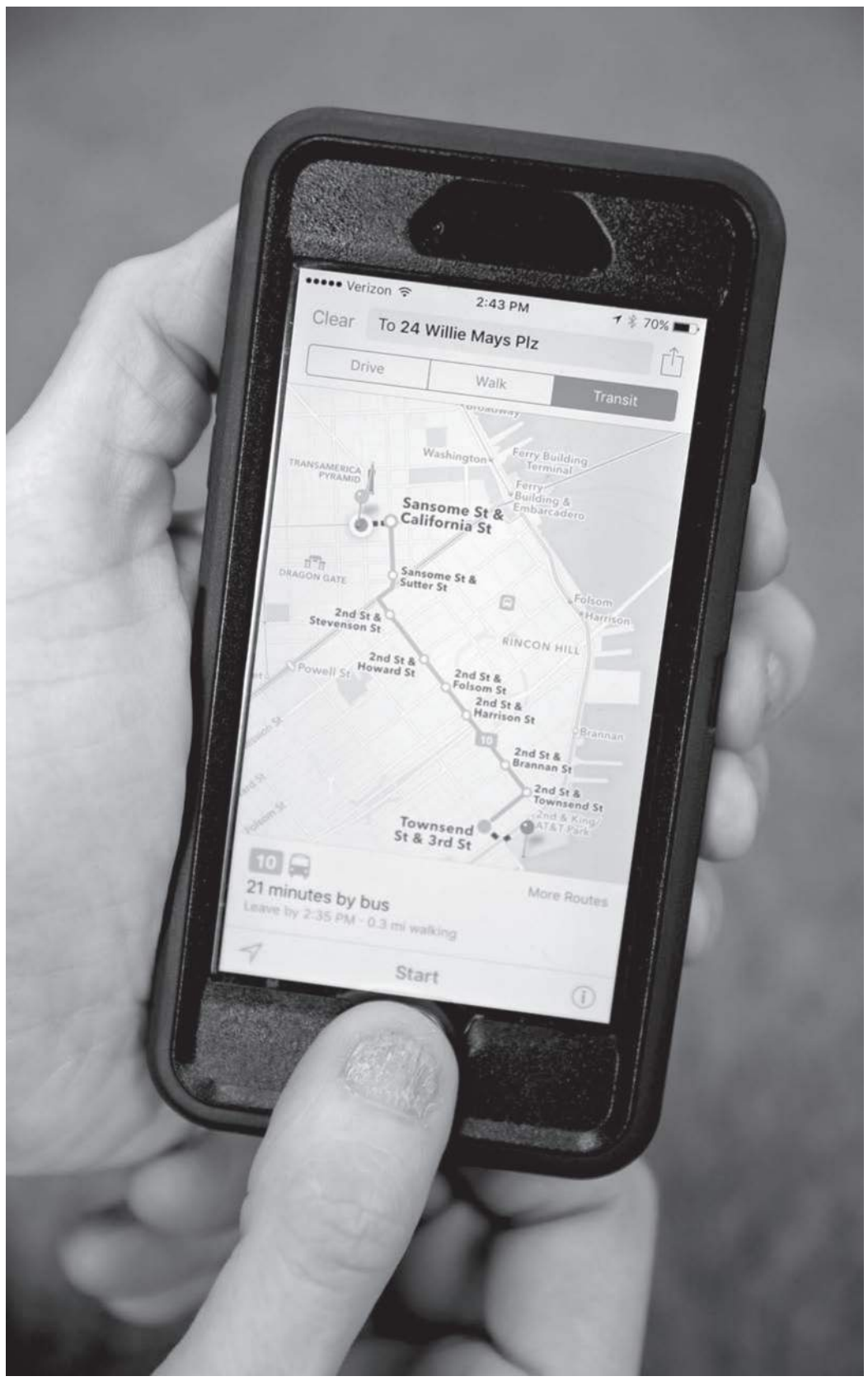
Google still dominates among all U.S. smartphones, though, in part because Apple Maps isn't available on Google's Android system, which is more prevalent than iPhones. In October, Google Maps had more than twice as many smartphone users as Apple Maps. Much like Apple, Google benefits as the default on Android.

For years, Google provided the default mapping service on iPhones. That changed as more people relied on turn-by-turn voice navigation with automatic rerouting, a feature Google offered only on Android. Apple built its own service from scratch and knocked Google Maps off the iPhone's home screen.

Google's initial forays into voice navigation in 2009 had problems, too, including directing motorists to left turns at no-turn intersections. But by 2012, Google Maps had improved significantly. By then, more people knew how a mapping service ought to work—and Apple's new offering fell short.

"I heard so many different horror stories that I was almost hesitant to try it," said Rick Ostopowicz, an iPhone owner in Catonsville, Maryland. "I remember once, it was taking me on a road that no longer existed."

CEO Tim Cook apologized and promised that Apple would "keep working non-stop" to deliver the best experience possible. Without much fanfare, the service gradually improved.



AP

In this photo taken Friday, Dec. 4, 2015, the Apple Maps app displays transit directions in San Francisco. Apple, Google and several smaller companies all help you get from point A to B via public transit.

"We are fast learners and we are fast at fixing things," said Greg "Joz" Joswiak, an Apple vice president who oversees product marketing for iPhones and related services. "We learned the maps business incredibly fast."

Apple now gets data from more than 3,000 sources for business listings, traffic and other information. In adding transit, Apple sent teams to map out subway entrances and signs. That results in more precise walking directions, as stations can stretch for blocks and the center point used by some services isn't necessarily the closest. Apple also started sending out vehicles with sensors to map roads, similar to Google's long-standing practice.

By making Maps a core iPhone feature, Apple made it easier for outside developers to include mapping features in their apps. When you go to Yelp, you can find directions to a business with one tap. When you go to the Starbucks app, you can see all the nearby stores.

On the flip side, the iPhone's Siri voice assistant leads direction requests straight to Apple Maps, as does tapping on an address in Mail and other apps. With that integration, users like Ostopowicz no longer hesitate. The default behavior isn't just a competitive advantage for Apple; it's a convenience for many users.

But default settings mean nothing if the experience isn't good—as it most definitely wasn't three years ago. Kristi Denton, an iPhone user in Austin, Texas, said that after getting bad directions with Apple Maps long ago, she has gone as far as to copy addresses and paste them into Google to avoid the default Apple service.

Lots of users, though, have returned. And many new iPhone users never experienced Maps at its worst.

Google Maps, of course, has also been improving. Last month, Google started letting motorists store mapping data on their phones so they can look up businesses and directions even when cellular service is spotty. It's available on Android now and coming to iPhones soon.

Google also has mapped such indoor venues as shopping malls and faraway lands as the Galapagos Islands. Google has better search tools for landmarks and business listings and offers transit maps for more regions than Apple. Google also provides biking directions and options to exclude highways and toll roads from driving directions.

Third-party apps, meanwhile, have their own innovations. Waze—now owned by Google—is a popular app for motorists to share traffic information and avoid jams. Moovit is better than both Google and Apple at factoring in temporary service changes in mass transit, while Citymapper offers suggestions on whether to board the front, middle or back of a train.

Apple says it's not done improving Maps.

But ultimately, Apple Maps doesn't need to be the best. It just needs to be good enough that its users won't look for something else.

AP

In this March 9, 2015, file photo, the Apple Maps app is displayed on an Apple Watch during an event in San Francisco. Apple Maps quickly became the butt of jokes when it debuted in 2012.

Good Housekeeping

How much does bathroom tile installation cost?

By JAMES FIGY
ANGIE'S LIST

Tile gives bathrooms an upscale appearance, and it's more durable than many other materials. But installing tile also costs more than bathtub surrounds or vinyl flooring.

Whether you've decided on your products or are still gathering bathroom floor and shower tile ideas, here's how much you can expect to pay.

What's the average cost to install bathroom tile?

In general, retiling a full bathroom, including shower walls and flooring, can cost $10,000 to $25,000, Costhelper.com says.

Jeff Veglia, owner of Jeff Veglia Remodeling & Tile Contracting in Lynnfield, Massachusetts, says most remodels cost $18,000 without fixtures, which add about $4,000 more.

"Most of them are about $22,000 to $25,000," Veglia says "So it all depends on what the average person wants to do in their bathroom."

For tile, materials and installation, a tub surround costs about $3,000 to $4,000, says Carlos Martinez, first officer of C-Bek Tile & Stone Design in North Hollywood, California. Floor tile adds another $3,000 to $4,500 or more, depending on the room's size. A walk-in shower typically costs between $2,500 and $5,000, but some companies charge more than $10,000, he says, adding that tile selections change the prices.

"It all depends on the size and the design that they want," Martinez says.

Do involved bathroom tile designs change costs?

MARTHA STAAB/ANGIE'S LIST/TNS
Complex bathroom tile designs can increase the installation price rapidly.

While square footage matters, tile installers account for the complexity of the tile pattern and tile size when pricing a job, says Andrew Forsmark, owner of Nordic Tile in Minneapolis.

"A general rule of thumb is that the smaller the tile, the more expensive it will cost to install," he says.

Residential bathroom tile jobs almost always require a mix of tiles and patterns, which changes with each job, Veglia says. More complexity means higher labor costs.

"If I'm using a 6-by-6 (inch) ceramic tile, just plain, straight up and down, that's very fast," Veglia says. "If I do a three different design shower, with a 12-by-12 staggered on the bottom, a border in the middle and a 6-by-6 at a diagonal on the top, ... that just doubled my work."

Hire smart for your bathroom tile job

Planning proved important for Angie's List member Scott Carter of Highland Park, Illinois, when he remodeled his outdated master bathroom. He and his wife, Micheline, met with a designer to select tile and fixtures before Mahogany Builders in Chicago completed the job.

"We had been thinking about redoing the master bath for about one year before we began," he says.

Carter spent about $6,800 on tile and marble for the master bathroom remodel. He broke down the cost as $500 on porcelain floor tile, $900 on porcelain shower tile, $1,800 on accent tiles on the walls and shower floors and $3,600 on marble for the vanity top, shower accents and threshold. The remodeling quote lumped tile installation labor with the general labor price, so he didn't have a number.

The bathroom remodel went smoothly, unlike remodeling experiences some of his friends had, Carter says. "We were happy that we spent a bit more to get a quality job from a reputable contractor," he says.

Forsmark advises homeowners to do their research and be wary of the cheapest bid when it comes to bathroom tile installation.

"Good tile work not only looks good but will also stand the test of time," Forsmark says. "A lot of deficient tile setters take shortcuts in their prep work— not using the correct backer board, not waterproofing seams or not using the right materials to set the actual tile with."

To hire smart, get multiple bids and ask the installers questions about the methods and materials they will use to revamp your bathroom's tile style.

James Figy is a reporter for Angie's List, a trusted provider of local consumer reviews and an online marketplace of services from top-rated providers.

Be sure to pest-proof your home

By ALAN J. HEAVENS
THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

If I've learned anything over the last 33 years of homeownership, it's that animals that exist happily outdoors three seasons of the year will try to find a warm space indoors in winter.

Over the years, I have found squirrels in the attic and a stray chipmunk in the basement.

When my family lived in a more rural environment, field mice could be found in kitchen drawers most winters, enjoying milk crackers—remember those?—and anything else in an easy-to-chew-open wrapper.

Mice, rats and even raccoons can take up residence inside homes when the weather turns cold, according to the folks who make Bobbex-R, an animal repellent.

Emphasis is on all-natural products that repel, rather than kill, without polluting the environment.

A single rodent in a home can quickly turn into an infestation, damaging walls and belongings and exposing your family to allergens and disease.

Removing an infestation can be costly and time-consuming, so it makes sense to be pro-active and try to prevent pests from coming inside in the first place.

Before the weather gets much cooler, take a look around your home to find any potential entry points and plug them. Remember, mice may be able to get in through openings as small as one-quarter inch wide.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends looking for entry points around doors and windows, pipes throughout the home, fireplaces, attics and crawl spaces, vents and drains.

You can do the job yourself or hire a professional to help pest-proof your home.

I have used repellents in the past that included some sort of ingredient that the targeted rodent didn't like. Cinnamon and garlic are two that I recall.

Now, what I do instead is trim back shrubbery and dead plants from around the house, including leaves that can hide the invaders from view.

Any foundation cracks I see are caulked. In some cases, especially when I am air-sealing spaces that might be used as a transitway, I use foam insulation that expands as it cures.

There is no sure-fire preventative, but try anyway.

COMFORT FOOD

S'more Cake Brownies

By HEALTHY EXCHANGES
KING FEATURES SYND., INC.

These chocolate treats are so yummy, you'll think your BEST holiday gift is enjoying a couple of these without guilt!

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

Sugar substitute to equal 3/4 cup sugar, suitable for baking

- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 cup fat-free yogurt
- 1/3 cup fat-free mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

3/4 cup water

- 1 cup miniature marshmallows
- 6 tablespoons purchased graham cracker crumbs
- 1/4 cup mini chocolate chips

1. Heat oven to 350 F. Spray a 9-by-13-inch cake pan with butter-flavored cooking spray.

2. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar substitute, cocoa, baking soda and baking powder. In a medium bowl, combine yogurt, mayonnaise, vanilla extract and water. Add liquid mixture to dry mixture. Mix gently just to combine.

3. Spread batter evenly into prepared cake pan. Bake for 15 minutes. Evenly sprinkle marshmallows over top of partially baked brownies.

4. In a small bowl, combine cracker crumbs and chocolate chips. Sprinkle crumb mixture evenly over top. Continue baking for 10 to 15 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

5. Place cake pan on a wire rack and let set for at least 10 minutes. Cut into 16 brownies. Makes 8 (2 each) servings.

** Each serving equals: 170 calories, 2g fat, 4g protein, 34g carb., 352mg sodium, 2g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 1/2 Starch, 1/2 Fat.*

To my dearest Family and Friends, some things I'd like to say.
But first of all, to let you know, that I arrived okay.
I'm writing this from heaven. Here I dwell with God above.
Here there's no more tears of sadness; here is just eternal love.
Please do not be unhappy just because I'm out of sight.
Remember that I am with you every morning, noon and night.
The day I had to leave you when my life on earth was through.
God picked me up and hugged me and He said:
"I welcome you."
In Loving Memory of Our Dear
Joana Katrina S. Vitug
Please join us in prayers as we remember
our beloved Joana on her
First Anniversary of her life in Heaven.
Saipan Mass Schedule:
December 11-18
San Antonio Church; 6pm
December 19
San Antonio Church; 8am
Tinian Mass Schedule:
Please check with San Jose Parish
for mass schedules

Life & Style

From food to makeup, 'Star Wars' stuff is out of this world

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Right now, in a store not too far away, there is a galaxy of new merchandise connected to "Star Wars: The Force Awakens."

Beyond the usual action figures and apparel, the seventh installment in the space franchise (and the first from merchandise-driven Disney) boasts a broader array of branded products than ever before: from Chewbacca Coffee-Mate creamer (Wookiees drink coffee?) and "Star Wars" mascara to $400 designer Death Star shoes and a $4,000 Millennium Falcon bed.

"It's wider and broader and deeper and covers more age ranges and is less gender specific than anything I have ever seen for 'Star Wars,'" said Steve Sansweet, Lucasfilm's former director of fan relations and Guinness world record holder for the largest collection of "Star Wars" memorabilia.

Expanding the universe of "Star Wars" merchandise internationally was part of Disney's original vision when it acquired Lucasfilm, he said: "It was very clear from the front, and they have followed their game plan."

"Star Wars toys have always played an important role in how our fans interact with the Saga," Lucasfilm president Kathleen Kennedy said when the first "Force Awakens" collectibles were introduced earlier this year. "They've inspired multiple generations to relive the experience of the movies and to create new adventures all their own. These spectacular 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens' products will continue that tradition."

The result is an amazingly diverse range of branded items, from the unexpected (light-up lightsaber chopsticks) to the unbelievable (haute couture Stormtrooper wear). International offerings have grown in scope and distinction, too, with local licensees and artisans interpreting the iconic characters for their cultures.

This photo provided by Disney Consumer Products shows a high heel shoe from the unique irregular Choice Star Wars shoe collection. AP

Sansweet recently added some Japanese items to his collection, including soy sauce plates and "little kokeshi dolls, which are typical of a small community in Japan," he said. "They're usually carved in traditional format of samurai or geisha or something like that, and now there's a whole series of 'Star Wars' (characters)."

Retired from Lucasfilm, Sansweet now shares his "Star Wars" collection with the public through his nonprofit Rancho Obi-Wan museum in Petaluma, California, where he offers educational tours and hosts private events, including two weddings.

Here's a look at some of the more unusual items keyed to "The Force Awakens," some of which Sansweet has already added to his collection:

FOOD: Chewbacca isn't the only one with his own Coffee-Mate creamer. Darth Vader, C-3PO, R2-D2 and Boba Fett also got the creamer treatment, and each is a different flavor. (Chewie is spiced latte.) New York's Ample Hills Creamery introduced two new flavors in "Star Wars" packaging: The Light Side is marshmallow ice cream with crispy clusters, and The Dark Side is dark chocolate with espresso fudge brownies.

Other branded food items include special General Mills cereal boxes (one shows the Trix rabbit as Princess Leia) with plastic "droid viewers" inside and Kraft macaroni and cheese with pasta in "Star Wars shapes."

"I'm chasing around trying to find bags of Darth Vader apples," Sansweet said. "It's crazy! But it's fun-crazy."

MAKEUP: CoverGirl's limited-edition "Star Wars" collection includes nail polish, mascara and lipstick in such shades as Droid, Jedi and Dark Apprentice.

CLOTHING: Beyond the typical T-shirts and PJs, there are one-of-a-kind designer outfits based on "The Force Awakens" characters, such as Halston's gown inspired by villain Kylo Ren, up for auction this month (www.charitybuzz.com) to benefit the Child Mind Institute. American watch maker Devon has a limited-edition "Star Wars" model available for $28,500. The outrageous "Star Wars" collection from British footwear company Irregular Choice is more affordable but may be harder to wear. The C-3PO flats are cute and low-key, but the Death Star platform booties with the Stormtrooper- and Darth Vader-shaped heels are out of this world.

LIFESTYLE: Adult collectors might covet Pottery Barn Kids' Millennium Falcon bed, modeled after the legendary starship (and only available in twin size). American Tourister has a line of "Star Wars" luggage, and the Disney Store has a backpack shaped like a Stormtrooper helmet. There's a Darth Vader toaster that brands your breakfast bread with the "Star Wars" logo and the aforementioned light-up lightsaber chopsticks, plus an X-Wing knife block and many other household items.

Is there anything that can't be branded "Star Wars?"

"There are limits," Sansweet said. "I'm not sure we've seen the end of the limits yet."

Q&A: Chris Hemsworth on fame, Thor and 'Heart of the Sea'

NEW YORK (AP)—Hosting "Saturday Night Live" earlier this year, Chris Hemsworth exaggerated his swift ascent in Hollywood: "If a jacked Australian with a perfect face can make it, anyone can," he said in a mock "American Express" ad.

Hemsworth, the 32-year-old Australian actor known the world over as Thor, appears as if perfectly chiseled out of movie star granite. But whatever his considerable natural gifts, Hemsworth has proven an interesting actor inclined to use his powerful screen presence in roles that both exalt it and upend it.

In "In the Heart of the Sea," which opens Friday, he reteams with Ron Howard, who directed him in "Rush," the 2013 movie that yielded Hemsworth's most confident starring performance as the Formula One driver James Hunt.

In "Heart of the Sea," a recounting of the plight of the Essex (the cursed whaling ship that inspired Herman Melville's "Moby-Dick"), Hemsworth plays the swashbuckling first mate. Shipwrecked by a mammoth sperm whale, Hemsworth's heroic seaman is humbled, left a gaunt survivor. (The actor shed considerable weight for the role.)

It's the kind of duality that defines Hemsworth: a hunk but a family man (he has three kids); an "Avengers" superhero but a talented comic actor. Along with his shirtless cameo in "Vacation" and playing the receptionist in the upcoming "Ghostbusters," he hosts "SNL" again on Saturday.

In a recent interview, Hemsworth discussed his new film, the box-office disappointment "Blackhat" and the stresses of being a Norse god.

AP: Do you ever feel any pressure to live up to Thor?

Hemsworth: You feel like you've tricked everyone successfully. I never felt big enough playing Thor. And then people talk about you like you're 9-foot tall and 800 pounds. I'm well aware of the illusion. There's not a second where I go: Yeah, I'm a god.

AP: Are you aware there's another Thor in New York right now? It's the nickname of the hard-throwing New York Mets pitcher Noah Syndergaard.

Hemsworth: (Laughs) I'll look him up! I think he's far more godlike than me.

AP: Your first taste of fame didn't come in Hollywood but in Australia as a star on the long-running Australian soap opera "Home and Away."

Hemsworth: I did get the recognition of: You're famous. I wouldn't say it came with a whole lot of respect, though. I wasn't considered an artist or actor. But, you know, it's a soap opera. That's kind of the universal opinion people have on that. I mean, I have a huge amount of respect for the show. I think it's harder than just about anything. It's 20 scenes a day and they're not the greatest scripts at times.

AP

In this Sunday, Nov. 22, 2015 photo, actor Chris Hemsworth poses for a portrait, in New York. Hemsworth stars in the new film, "In the Heart of the Sea." The movie opens in U.S. theaters on Dec. 11, 2015.

AP: How did that prepare you for Hollywood?

Hemsworth: I walked the gamut of what you can experience in this business in that period, and no one was paying any great attention __ which was awesome. By the time I got to Hollywood, it was like: Now it's time to work, and I know why I love it. I kind of got a chance to start again.

AP: The best scene of "Thor" must have been when Thor tries coffee for the first time, slams it on the floor and demands another.

Hemsworth: It's funny, that's probably closer to me than the serious, gladiatorial-type Thor. I'd rather have fun with it. It comes easier. When doing Thor, those scenes where he (lowers voice) spoke like this and everything was grand and big, people thought: That's what he is. "Saturday Night Live" and "Vacation," as well, are good opportunities to go: Actually it's not.

AP: What was your experience on Michael Mann's cyber-crime thriller "Blackhat," which some critics defended but which flopped at the box office?

Hemsworth: Really hard, actually. I love Michael and it was great. But I do wish I had done more of what I truly wanted to do. I remember being so in awe of him that I said I would just do anything he said, regardless of whether I agreed with it. And that's a real danger because someone hires you because they want to you bring what you're going to bring to the table. I was just so in awe of Michael Mann that I went, "Yep, cool. Wherever you want me." So I don't feel like it was my performance so much. And that wasn't the fault of Michael Mann.

AP: You and Howard, however, seem to be a good team.

Hemsworth: I can't speak for him but for me ("Rush") was the first time I felt I was truly in an environment where I could just take risks and explore. Something felt sort of pure about that experience. And it was probably the role, too, something I directly related to or liked about that character. Full of insecurity and fear but also cockiness and overconfidence. It was all these contradictory things.

CHART TOPPERS

The top 10 songs and albums on the iTunes Store

TOP SONGS

1. Hello, Adele
2. Sorry, Justin Bieber
3. Love Yourself, Justin Bieber
4. Hallelujah, Jordan Smith
5. Confident, Demi Lovato
6. Hotline Bling, Drake
7. Same Old Love, Selena Gomez
8. Like I'm Gonna Lose You (feat. John Legend), Meghan Trainor
9. I'd Just Love To Lay You Down, Barrett Baber
10. Ex's & Oh's, Elle King

TOP ALBUMS

1. **25**, Adele
2. **Purpose**, Justin Bieber
3. **But You Caint Use My Phone**, Erykah Badu
4. **That's Christmas to Me**, Pentatonix
5. **1989**, Taylor Swift
6. **A Head Full of Dreams**, Coldplay
7. **Reloaded: 20 #1 Hits**, Blake Shelton
8. **Storyteller**, Carrie Underwood
9. **Christmas**, Michael Bublé
10. **Revival (Deluxe)**, Selena Gomez

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Lamar, Swift, the Weeknd lead Grammy nominees

By GREG KOT
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Kendrick Lamar leads the way into the Grammy Awards on Feb. 15 with 11 nominations, and Taylor Swift and the Weeknd each have seven.

The nominations, announced Monday by the Recording Academy, cover 83 musical categories, including album of the year, for which Lamar ("To Pimp a Butterfly"), Swift ("1989") and the Weeknd ("Beauty Behind the Madness") all received a nod. Other album-of-the-year nominees are Alabama Shakes for "Sound & Color" and veteran country songwriter Chris Stapleton for his debut album, "Traveller."

In the other major categories, Lamar, Swift and the Weeknd also fared well, though Swift was the only performer to be nominated for album, song and record of the year.

Nominees for record of the year, which honors the artist and the production team, include Swift ("Blank Space") and the Weeknd ("Can't Feel My Face"), as well as D'Angelo ("Really Love"), Mark Ronson with Bruno Mars ("Uptown Funk") and Ed Sheeran ("Thinking Out Loud").

For song of the year, a songwriters award, Lamar got a nod for "Alright" and Swift for "Blank Space," while Little Big Town scored for "Girl Crush," Wiz Khalifa with Charlie Puth for "See You Again" and Sheeran for "Thinking Out Loud."

The best new artist nominees include Australian rocker Courtney Barnett, singer-songwriters James Bay and Tori Kelly, country hitmaker Sam Hunt and pop singer Meghan Trainor.

Also scoring big was rapper Drake, with five nominations, and a handful of producers, engineers and songwriters: Max Martin with six nominations, and Tom Coyne, Serban Ghenea and John Hanes with five.

Notably bypassed in this year's nominations was British folk-rock band Mumford & Sons, which received eight nominations and won a Grammy in 2013 for album of the year for "Babel." But the academy ignored the band's latest release, "Wilder Mind," even though it topped the Billboard album chart.

The awards cover recordings released between Oct. 1, 2014, and Sept. 30, 2015, which means that Adele's recent multimillion-selling album, "25," isn't eligible.

Among Kanye West's four nominations are two (best rap performance, rap song) for "All Day," which means that one of its featured performers _ Paul McCartney _ is in line for his first rap Grammy.

Short list

The 58th annual Grammy Awards will be presented Feb. 15.

Album of the year

- *Sound & Color,* **Alabama Shakes**
- *To Pimp a Butterfly,* **Kendrick Lamar**
- *Traveller,* **Chris Stapleton**
- *1989,* **Taylor Swift**
- *Beauty Behind the Madness,* **The Weeknd**

Best new artist

- Courtney Barnett
- James Bay
- Sam Hunt
- Tori Kelly
- Meghan Trainor

Source: National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Eagles of Death Metal members appear with U2 on Paris stage

PARIS (AP)—Members of the California rock band Eagles of Death Metal have made a surprise return to a Paris stage Monday night during a concert by U2, less than a month after suicide bombers stormed the band's Nov. 13 gig at the Bataclan theater and killed 89 people. U2 is playing the last of four concerts in Paris. The last two were postponed when France announced a state of emergency following the attacks that killed 130 people. It is the first time the Eagles of Death Metal band has performed since the attacks, which band members escaped under harrowing circumstances.

Sundance Film Festival announces slate of premieres

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Kristen Stewart, Michael Shannon, Anna Kendrick and Danny DeVito are among the actors appearing in films premiering at the Sundance Film Festival in January. Festival organizers announced the slate of dramatic and documentary premieres on Monday. Most of the titles won't be seen outside the January festival for several months, but premiering at the independent-film showcase carries its own prestige. Stewart appears in "Certain Women," alongside Laura Dern and Michelle Williams, who also stars in "Manchester by the Sea" with Casey Affleck. Shannon appears in two films premiering at the festival: "Complete Unknown" and "Frank & Lola," which is described as a "psychosexual noir love story." Kendrick stars with John Krasinski, Margo Martindale and Richard Jenkins in "The Hollars," which Krasinski also directed. DeVito appears with Greta Gerwig, Julie Delpy and Ellen Burstyn in "Wiener-Dog," about a dachshund that spreads comfort and joy, directed by Todd Solondz.

Gwyneth Paltrow's Goop pop-up shop in NYC robbed

NEW YORK (AP)—Authorities are searching for three men who robbed Gwyneth Paltrow's Goop pop-up shop in New York City of more than $173,000 worth of jewelry and watches. It happened Saturday afternoon at the lifestyle website's temporary store inside The Shops at Columbus Circle in midtown Manhattan's Time Warner Center. The store had one of its busiest days Saturday. Police say one of the suspects used some kind of object to open a cabinet containing the merchandise while the employees were distracted. A statement from Goop says its customers and staff are safe, and the store remains open for business "with proper security precautions in place." The store is open through Dec. 24.

And the Kimye baby's name is...Saint West

LOS ANGELES (AP)—And the baby du jour's name is ... Saint West.

Kim Kardashian West and hubby Kanye announced the name of their new boy via Twitter and her app. North's sibling was born Saturday, weighing in at 8 pounds, 1 ounce.

Saint is in fine company. His cousins include Reign Aston Disick.

Kardashian West has tracked her pregnancy online for her 37 million Twitter followers, posting an image late Friday of her bare belly with the caption, "Ready whenever you are lol."

North was born in 2013.

Kardashian, 35, and West, 38, were married last year in Florence, Italy, in a gala ceremony filmed for E!'s "Keeping Up With the Kardashians." West proposed to his bride in October 2013, renting out San Francisco's AT&T Park for the occasion.

Fox suspends 2 analysts for language against Obama

NEW YORK (AP)—Two Fox News contributors were suspended Monday for using inappropriate language about President Barack Obama while discussing his speech on terrorism the night before in two separate episodes.

The analysts, former U.S. Army Lt. Col. Ralph Peters and actress Stacey Dash, were each ordered off the air for two weeks.

Peters was appearing on a Fox Business Network program hosted by Stuart Varney when he was asked his reaction to the president's speech. He didn't like it.

"This guy is such a total pussy, it's stunning," Peters said. After he spoke some more, Varney said that while he could tell Peters was "super angry," he shouldn't use such language.

Dash, who appeared in the movie "Clueless" and has been a Fox contributor since 2014, said on Fox News Channel's noontime program "Outnumbered" that Obama's speech was an epic fail and followed up with an obscenity. "I felt like he could give a s---, excuse me, like he could care less."

Bill Shine, senior executive vice president of programming at Fox, said in both cases the language "was completely inappropriate and unacceptable for our air

'Charlie Brown' actor gets prison time for making threat

SAN DIEGO (AP)—A former child actor who was the voice of Charlie Brown in beloved "Peanuts" TV specials was sentenced to nearly five years in prison Monday for making criminal threats.

Peter Robbins, 59, pleaded guilty last month to sending threatening letters to a manager at a mobile home park in suburban Oceanside, where he lived. He also sent letters to members of the media in which he offered to pay money to have San Diego County Sheriff Bill Gore killed.

Prosecutors said he also threatened a San Diego judge, but that charge was not part of a plea agreement.

Robbins, who made numerous outbursts in earlier hearings, was relatively subdued at his sentencing, according to The San Diego Union-Tribune. His attorney, Joey Super, made a request on his client's behalf to withdraw his plea.

William Chidsey Jr., a retired Los Angeles Superior Court judge who was brought in to handle the case after San Diego judges recused themselves, sentenced the former actor to four years and eight months in prison.

Robbins has said he has bipolar disorder and suffers from paranoid schizophrenia.

From age 9 to 13, Robbins was the voice of Charlie Brown in a series of 1960s animated classics, including "A Charlie Brown Christmas" and "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown."

Two years ago, Robbins pleaded guilty to threatening a former girlfriend and her plastic surgeon.

Husband's sexual assaults can no longer be ignored

DEAR ABBY: I have been with my husband for almost 14 years. I'm a sound sleeper, and I suspect he has been having sex with me while I'm sleeping. I have woken up without clothes on, my undergarments askew or the waistband "rolled on." I called him on it and told him I knew and that I'm not OK with it.

Weeks later, I caught him red-handed. This time I was awake, but I was so frightened that I froze! I was sexually abused as a child and raped as an adult, and now I feel like my marriage has been turned upside down. My husband denies it. He claims it's all in my head.

My friends say that for the sake of my children I should ignore it or I'll turn their lives upside down. Abby, everyone thinks my husband is a catch! I'm sure if I walk away I'll lose friends -- maybe even some of my family. Please help me. I feel lost.

TURNED UPSIDE DOWN IN ILLINOIS

DEAR TURNED UPSIDE DOWN: Your friends are wrong, and you should NOT "ignore" this. Sex without a person's consent is rape! When a husband does what you have described, it is called spousal rape.

Because he claims this is "all in your head," for your own sanity, make an appointment to discuss this with a licensed psychotherapist. With your unfortunate history, you should have spoken with someone already. Your husband is either grossly insensitive or derives pleasure from being a predator. His behavior is appalling, and you do not have to stand for it.

Counseling can help you decide whether to remain in this marriage. Regardless of what your ultimate decision may be, it will help you be emotionally resilient enough to live with your choice regardless of what your "friends" and family members may think.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My fiance, "Rob," and I are pregnant. This should be an exciting time for me, but he keeps bringing up a previous relationship during which he had an unplanned child. That was 10 years ago, and the mother denied him access.

I have told Rob how much his mentioning it upsets me and I have asked him not to do it, especially during my pregnancy. I want to feel happy and special as the woman who will be providing Rob with an actual family unit. But instead I feel like second-best and resentful.

This should be a time to focus on us and our new baby, not the child that isn't in his life or that woman and her stupid actions. Please advise me.

SOON-TO-BE MOM IN DENVER

DEAR MOM: You ARE special and you ARE the person who is creating a new family with Rob, but your pregnancy may be a painful reminder of the child he "lost." He may be afraid the same thing could happen again and need all the reassurance you can give him that it won't.

Because his bringing up the past relationship is hurtful, suggest he talk with a licensed mental health professional about it. Sometimes the best way to stop grieving is to talk about it.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

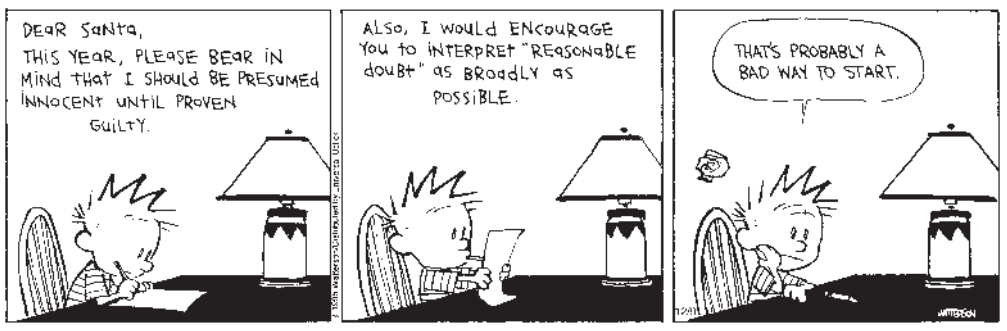
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

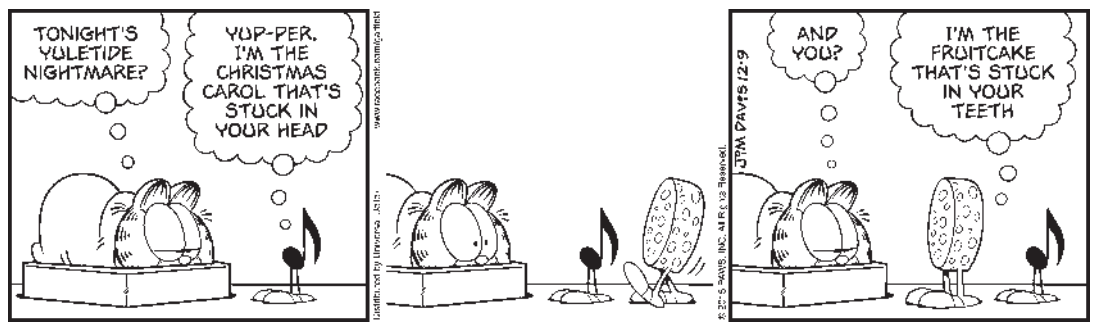
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


DEAR SANTA,
THIS YEAR, PLEASE BEAR IN MIND THAT I SHOULD BE PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY.
ALSO, I WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO INTERPRET "REASONABLE DOUBT" AS BROADLY AS POSSIBLE.
THAT'S PROBABLY A BAD WAY TO START.

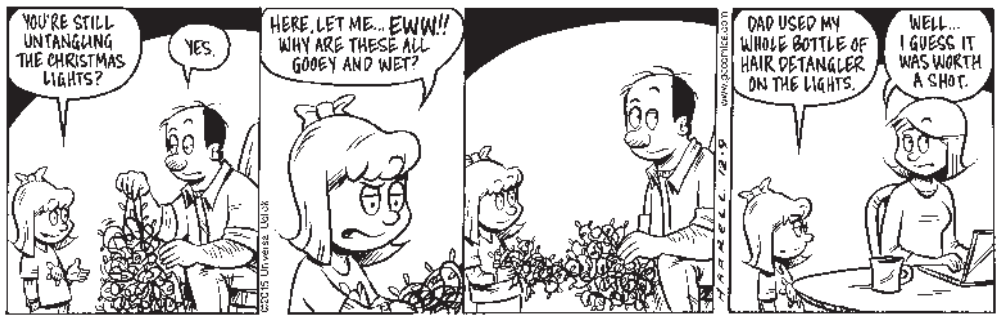
Garfield®

By Jim Davis


TONIGHT'S YULETIDE NIGHTMARE?
YUP-PER. I'M THE CHRISTMAS CAROL THAT'S STUCK IN YOUR HEAD
AND YOU?
I'M THE FRUITCAKE THAT'S STUCK IN YOUR TEETH

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


YOU'RE STILL UNTANGLING THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS?
YES.
HERE, LET ME... EWW!! WHY ARE THESE ALL GOOEY AND WET?
DAD USED MY WHOLE BOTTLE OF HAIR DETANGLER ON THE LIGHTS.
WELL... I GUESS IT WAS WORTH A SHOT.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

THE BARTENDER DOWN AT SID'S, THE BEER GUY AT THE BALLPARK...
ARE WE FORGETTING ANYONE?
NO.
I THINK WE'RE DONE WITH OUR CHRISTMAS CARDS

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

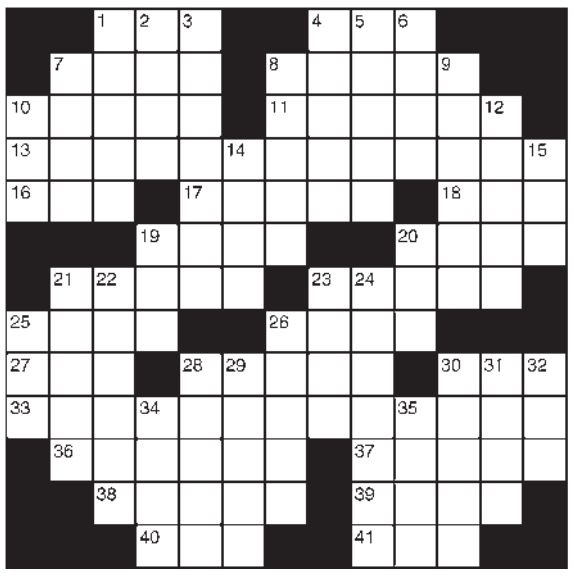
ACROSS
1 Tot's "piggy"
4 U.K. network
7 Ersatz
8 "Twilight" girl
10 Roo's refuge
11 "Seinfeld" gal
13 1982 Meryl Streep film
16 "Pale" brew
17 Some like them hot?
18 Mystery man
19 Knighted men
20 Stretched tight
21 Shoes without heels
23 Verbal exams
25 Make coffee
26 "Moby-Dick" captain
27 Old-time oath
28 New —, India
30 "— I help you?"
33 1984 Meryl Streep film
36 Ebb
37 City bonds, for short
38 Yard trimmer
39 Matured
40 Lawn layer
41 Acrobat catcher

DOWN
1 Hosiery hue
2 "That hurts!"
3 Museum show
4 Rude burp
5 Doldrums
6 TV ad award
7 Buffoon
8 Defeats
9 Ox or fox
10 Unpaid TV spot
12 Beige shades
14 Pencil holders?
15 Phone no. adjunct
19 Beheld
20 File extension?
21 Monk
22 Sobieski of "NYC 22"
23 Surprised greeting
24 Dustin Hoffman film
25 Closest pal, in a text
26 Storyteller Horatio
28 San — Chargers
29 Stopped
30 "Water Lilies" painter
31 Rah-rah
32 "You bet!"
34 Digital readouts (Abbr.)
35 Olympic sled

Solution time: 24 mins.

F	U	N	D		I	P	S		J	A	B	S		
I	S	E	E		I	O	U		O	L	E	O		
L	E	A	N		M	A	R	O	B	O	T	O		
M	A	F	I	X	I	T		C	H	F	A	T		
			H	I	I		S	H	O					
H	A	N	O	I		M	A	S	P	O	C	K		
M		O			L	E	A			N	I	A		
M	A	M	A	A	R	C	H		P	L	E	A	T	
			B	I	D		A	F	I					
T	O	A	S	T		M	A	C	L	E	A	N		
M	A	P	E	A	N	U	T		I	L	L	I	E	
A	M	E	N		U	S	C		T	I	N	T		
N	E	X	T		N	E	C		H	A	T	S		

Yesterday's answer 12-9



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Simon Helberg, 35; Felicity Huffman, 53; Donny Osmond, 58; Dame Judi Dench, 81.

Happy Birthday: Consider where you stand to gain the most. Making positive changes at home or work will help you avoid any problems with authority figures or institutions. Problems will crop up if you travel or get involved in foreign investments, philosophies or groups that don't share your same values. Protect what you have. Trust in yourself. Your numbers are 6, 17, 21, 25, 39, 46, 48.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Put travel plans or educational pursuits into motion. Pick up information and negotiate deals that could ensure a brighter future. Only you can bring about the changes you want in your life. Reassess your current situation and make a move. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Initiate changes instead of waiting for someone else to take the lead. Your strength and courage will draw interest from others and make your loved ones proud. Make special celebratory plans for two. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You'll be sidetracked if you give in to the people who are trying to take advantage of you. Pay more attention to your own responsibilities and refuse to indulge in someone else's melodrama. Interference and meddling will lead to misunderstandings and regret. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Pay closer attention to your creative goals and make yourself available when friends, children or your loved ones need a helping hand. What you do will reflect who you are and make a difference for others. Romance is on the rise. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Avoid making changes that may disrupt your domestic scene. Strive to get involved in projects that will encourage you to take positive action regarding your work. Put a plan in place that will help you improve your emotional, mental and physical well-being. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Stick to facts and don't fall short when it comes to your promises or responsibilities. You won't be given much leeway if you make a mistake. Strive for optimum performance both personally and professionally. Romance is encouraged. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Travel or socializing with friends or relatives will result in some interesting suggestions and changes to your current situation. A partnership will undergo changes that could alter the way you've been performing. Walk away from discord. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): There is money to be made, but you may have to sacrifice being a good Samaritan and focus instead on finding paying jobs rather than doing work for free. Don't let others take advantage of your loyalty and dedication. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Secrets will be revealed if you have been withholding information that can affect your reputation, status or position. Do your best to cover your tracks and own up to anything that could incriminate you before you are blamed openly. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Money deals, negotiations and expanding your financial interests are all favored as long as you don't get involved in joint ventures. Someone's plans could place a burden on you. Look out for yourself and the ones you love. Make romance a priority. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Base decisions on facts, not emotions, or you will make poor choices. You will gain respect from others if you tie up loose ends and set high standards for yourself. Live up to your promises, but don't neglect your health. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): You'll be getting mixed signals from others. Rely on your intuition to guide you in matters concerning health, money and information. Situations are not likely to be as they appear. Take a wait-and-see approach if you have any doubts. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are determined, restless and eager to please. You are inventive and enthusiastic.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		5	1	8	6			
			5			2		
4		8					3	
7	6				1			2
	8						7	
5	9	3						8
9	4		3				5	
8				2	4	9		
			9	6				

Difficulty Level ★★★ 12/09

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	9	3	8	4	5	2	1	7
5	2	8	9	7	1	3	4	6
4	7	1	6	3	2	8	9	5
9	3	2	5	1	6	7	8	4
8	1	4	3	2	7	5	6	9
7	5	6	4	8	9	1	2	3
2	4	9	7	5	8	6	3	1
3	8	5	1	6	4	9	7	2
1	6	7	2	9	3	4	5	8

Difficulty Level ★★ 12/09

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

MAILING OUT CHRISTMAS CARDS **Solution: 8 letters**

E	S	S	A	N	T	A	C	L	A	U	S	H	S	S
D	G	S	E	R	P	N	E	M	W	O	N	S	P	T
A	I	A	E	A	S	S	E	R	D	D	A	I	M	I
M	N	E	S	N	S	E	C	W	E	L	D	N	A	C
E	S	G	C	S	I	O	G	T	Y	E	E	I	T	K
M	C	L	E	A	E	S	N	A	Z	E	M	F	S	E
O	A	E	L	L	E	M	U	I	M	Ⓓ	A	G	I	R
H	R	B	V	F	S	P	L	B	K	I	Ⓝ	R	L	S
D	O	A	E	E	R	A	R	R	T	I	S	Ⓔ	S	R
E	L	L	S	V	N	O	O	I	T	L	T	E	Ⓢ	E
T	I	M	I	O	I	W	M	I	O	T	M	T	T	V
N	N	E	S	D	T	E	R	B	E	A	A	I	O	I
I	G	R	E	R	A	W	M	R	I	R	U	N	C	L
R	E	R	A	H	S	Y	S	L	S	R	E	G	K	E
P	Y	Y	S	H	S	I	W	S	N	G	I	S	E	D

©2015 Universal Uclick www.wonderword.com Download the Wordamaze Game App 12/9

Address, Angels, Artwork, Business, Candle, Caroling, Deliver, Designs, Dove, Elves, Email, Embroidery, Finish, From, Greetings, Holiday, Homemade, Images, Label, Letters, List, Merry, Message, Name, New Year's, Peace, Personalized, Printed, Santa Claus, Season, Send, Share, Snowmen, Stamps, Stars, Stickers, Stock, Symbols, Time, Trees, Wish, Writing

Yesterday's Answer: Conclude

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---

(1) Office and Administrative Support Worker, must be fluent in Korean language, (1) Electrician – $6.05/hr. Minimum of 5 years experience. Fax resume to 234-9796. Kimco Ent. Inc.

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(1) Sales Agent (for Chinese Market)
• Must know how to speak and write Chinese
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-must have 5 years experience.
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Fluent in Mandarin Language
Tinian
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For more information, call: 287-8855

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$0.65 per sq/ft. Negotiable
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235-6527/28 or 285-1317

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COMMERCIAL CLEANER (1)
- 1-2 years experience in maintenance & repair works; or 1-2 years experience as a commercial cleaner.
- At least high school graduate

Green Leisure LLC
Please fax resume to 670.234.5104

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
JNJ CORPORATION
(3) Cook
• 2 years experience
• Flexible time
Send resume to PMB 114 Box 10002, Saipan, MP 96950

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At least High School graduate. With valid driver's license. Needs to be physically fit and willing to work flexible time and must be hardworking.
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Tel. No.: 235-7011

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Triple J Corporate Office,
Ground Floor, Surfrider Resort & Beach Club
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May submit resume at the
corpoffice@triplejsaipan.com
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JVA No. 15-061

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Closing Date: Tuesday, December 15, 2015

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LOCATION : Administration (Dandan Office), Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, USA.
SALARY : $14,704.00 per annum.
CONTRACT : Not Contracted.
POSITION(S) : One (1)

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Drop off your CUC Employment Application at the CUC Human Resource Office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan. Otherwise, you may drop it off at the Tinian and Rota Administration Office.

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Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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Lowry scores 27, Raptors beat Lakers 102-93 to end slide

AP

Toronto Raptors' Terrence Ross, center, scores on Los Angeles Lakers' Jordan Clarkson, left, and Kobe Bryant, right, during first half NBA basketball action in Toronto on Monday, Dec. 7, 2015.

TORONTO (AP)— While the sellout crowd left no doubt it came to watch Kobe Bryant say goodbye to Canada, Terrence Ross took full advantage of his first start this season.

The former NBA slam dunk champion proved a sparkplug with 22 points, including a team-high nine in the fourth quarter, as the Toronto Raptors put two tough home losses in the rearview mirror and beat the Los Angeles Lakers 102-93 on Monday night.

Kyle Lowry scored 27 points for the Raptors, and Bismack Biyombo had a career-high 15 points with 13 rebounds.

But it was Ross' strong, one-handed slam that finally gave Toronto the lead for good with 6:55 to go, and the Raptors quickly went on an 11-0 run to remove any doubt about the final outcome.

Ross started in place of injured forward DeMarre Carroll.

"He was great and that is the T we need on a nightly basis," teammate DeMar DeRozan said. "When he does that it makes our job a lot easier."

In what was almost certainly his last NBA appearance in Toronto, Bryant shot 8 of 16 for 21 points as the Raptors swept the season series from the Lakers for the first time.

The crowd of 20,163, the largest ever at Air Canada Centre to watch the five-time NBA champion, certainly showed its appreciation for his 20 years in a Lakers uniform.

"Wow! Wow!" Bryant said afterward. "It felt absolutely amazing. Sitting on the bench and they started chanting, 'We want Kobe!' (I was like), give me 5 minutes."

Bryant, who announced his plans to retire after this season, has averaged 27 points in 33 career games against the Raptors. He's scored 891 points against them, fifth all-time among opponents. And he has reached 40 points five times versus Toronto, more than any other player.

Bryant was given a standing ovation when Lakers coach Byron Scott removed him for the final time with 24.6 seconds remaining.

"It's a little bit of everything to see him walking away from the game, especially someone I idolized and grew up watching," said DeRozan, raised in the Los Angeles area. "I'm honored to have the opportunity just to compete against him.

"When I'm old I can add in stories that I played against Kobe, like a lot of older guys do about Michael Jordan."

After managing only five points in Sunday's loss at Detroit, where he was suffering from a stomach flu, Bryant looked much more like his old self—shooting 50 percent from the floor for the first time this season.

"He rebounded the ball, played much better under control, took some great shots," Scott said. "We had some great looks all night long, we just didn't knock them down; I like the pace that we played at much better as well."

Scott shuffled his starting lineup before the game, removing rookie guard D'Angelo Russell and second-year forward Julius Randle and replacing them with Lou Williams and Larry Nance Jr. Russell, the second overall pick in this year's draft, and Randle, the seventh choice in 2014, had previously started every game.

Randle had 15 points and 11 rebounds off the bench.

"Those two still have to understand how to play this game and it's a tough game," Scott said. "They're young, and they're a big part of our future, no doubt about that, but I still think at this point of their career you can still learn some things by sitting there watching as well.

"It's not so much that they did anything wrong, it was more of a change and get some other fresh blood in there."

Clippers 110, Timberwolves 106

In Minneapolis, DeAndre Jordan had 20 points, 12 rebounds and four blocks to lift Los Angeles over Minnesota.

Blake Griffin had 16 points and 11 rebounds, and Chris Paul made a surprise return to the lineup after missing the previous two games with a rib injury for the Clippers (12-9), who have won five of six. Paul finished with 14 points and five assists in 32 minutes.

Karl-Anthony Towns had 18 points on 7-for-9 shooting, including 3 of 3 from 3-point range for the Timberwolves (8-12), who fell to 2-9 at home. Zach LaVine scored 21 and Shabazz Muhammad added 13 points and nine rebounds.

Los Angeles went 26 for 29 at the free throw line and even Jordan was 4 of 6.

The Clippers trailed 98-95 with a minute to play, but Jordan threw down an alley-oop and then blocked a shot by LaVine. Griffin scored on a layup for a 99-98 lead with 25 seconds to play. The Clippers won a free throw shooting contest down the stretch.

Hornets 104, Pistons 84

In Charlotte, N.C., Cody Zeller scored 20 points and Charlotte snapped Detroit's four-game winning streak.

Marvin Williams added 14 points and 12 rebounds, and Kemba Walker had 14 points and nine rebounds for Charlotte, which has won seven of nine. Nicolas Batum added 13 points, eight assists and seven rebounds in another solid all-around game for the Hornets (12-8).

The Pistons (12-10) were led by Kentavious Caldwell-Pope's 16 points and Ersan Ilyasova's 15 points and 11 rebounds.

Charlotte, which has struggled all season on the glass, outrebounded Detroit 57-41 despite playing without injured center Al Jefferson.

Celtics 111, Pelicans 93

In New Orleans, Isaiah Thomas scored 22 points, Kelly Olynyk added 21 in a reserve role and Boston defeated struggling New Orleans.

Jae Crowder scored 17 for the Celtics, while Jared Sullinger tied a career high with 20 rebounds to go with 11 points.

Seemingly out of rhythm after early foul trouble, Anthony Davis was 8-of-21 shooting and finished with 16 points and three blocks. Ryan Anderson scored 18 for the Pelicans, but New Orleans' starting backcourt struggled. Tyreke Evans and Eric Gordon were held scoreless and wound up playing limited minutes.

Bucks 90, Trail Blazers 88

In Milwaukee, Greg Monroe's layup put Milwaukee ahead with seconds left and John Henson swatted away Meyers Leonard's potential game-winning shot to help the Bucks edge Portland.

O.J. Mayo hit a 3-pointer that cut Portland's lead to 88-87 with 16.3 seconds left, and Michael Carter-Williams tied up CJ McCollum on the inbounds play. Carter-Williams won the jump ball and the Bucks worked it down low to Monroe.

The Trail Blazers had one last chance, but Henson deflected Leonard's in-close shot to preserve the win.

Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 17, Monroe added 16 points and 12 rebounds, and Mayo had 15 points for Milwaukee, which had lost 10 of 14.

Damian Lillard scored 23 for Portland, which fell to 0-7 when failing to score 100 points.

Wizards 114, Heat 103

In Miami, John Wall scored 26 points one night after leaving a game with a sore knee and Gary Neal added 21 including a debated 3-pointer with just over a minute left to lead Washington.

Bradley Beal scored 21 and Otto Porter finished with 13 points and 14 rebounds for the Wizards, who never trailed in the fourth.

The Heat argued that Beal traveled when he lost control of the ball and regained it under the basket with 1:10 remaining. Beal sent it to Neal for a 3 from the right corner that put Washington up five and essentially served as the clincher.

Miami's Chris Bosh was ejected for arguing calls and non-calls with 28 seconds remaining, the second ejection of his 13-year career.

Dwyane Wade led Miami with 26 points. Goran Dragic added 20 and Bosh scored 18 for the Heat, who fell from the No. 1 spot in the Eastern Conference.

Suns 103, Bulls 101

In Chicago, Mirza Teletovic scored 21 points, including a follow basket with 0.3 seconds left, to cap Phoenix's furious fourth-quarter rally from 16 points down.

Brandon Knight had 17 of his 21 points in the fourth to snap a four-game skid. Phoenix outscored Chicago 42-24 in the final period.

Pau Gasol scored 22 points to lead the Bulls, Jimmy Butler added 19 and Derrick Rose 14.

Chicago led most of the way and its advantage grew to 77-61 entering the fourth quarter as Phoenix was held to 10 points on 4 of 20 shooting in the third.

Spurs 119, 76ers 68

In Philadelphia, With new front office executive Jerry Colangelo sitting courtside, the Philadelphia 76ers showed him just how far away they are from becoming a competitive franchise.

Tim Duncan, Manu Ginobili and Kawhi Leonard all sat out and the San Antonio Spurs still rolled past the Sixers, 119-68 on Monday night.

LaMarcus Aldridge led the Spurs with 26 points and nine rebounds and Tony Parker scored 12 points.

Coach Gregg Popovich rested Duncan and Ginoboli against the hapless Sixers and Leonard was ill.

Robert Covington, Nik Stauskas and Nerlens Noel each scored 13 points for Philadelphia, which fell to 1-21.

Mavericks 104, Knicks 97

In New York, Dirk Nowitzki scored 25 points and Dallas withstood a comeback attempt sparked by Kristaps Porzingis to beat New York.

Porzingis finished with 28 points in his first matchup with Nowitzki, the German great he has been compared to for his perimeter shooting skills by a 7-footer.

The Latvian rookie made consecutive 3-pointers as the Knicks cut what had been a 23-point deficit to 101-97 with 43 seconds left, then blocked Deron Williams' shot. But Carmelo Anthony was called for an offensive foul as the Knicks were trying to work to get the ball to Porzingis for another shot, and Nowitzki followed with a free throw before Williams made two more to close it out.

Williams had 20 points and seven assists.

Cowboys top Redskins 19-16 on Bailey's 54-yard field goal

AP
Washington Redskins running back Matt Jones (31) is stopped by the Dallas Cowboys defense including strong safety Barry Church (42) and free safety J.J. Wilcox (27) during the first half of an NFL football game in Landover, Md., Monday, Dec. 7, 2015.

LANDOVER, Md. (AP)—Dez Bryant's tantrum on the Dallas Cowboys' sideline was not a good look. Neither was Darren McFadden's two-fumble performance. Matt Cassel's passes often sailed nowhere near his receivers.

All in all, it was an ugly game, devoid of any style points or many scoreboard points until the final 1 1/2 minutes. Perhaps fittingly, a fumbled punt return by Washington's DeSean Jackson deep in his own territory led to Dallas' only touchdown.

And yet, none of that mattered to Dallas, really, because by beating Washington 19-16 on Dan Bailey's 54-yard field goal with 9 seconds left Monday night, the Cowboys somehow kept themselves in the thick of the playoff chase in the woeful NFC East.

"We have everything to gain and everything to lose," Bryant said. "We are still in this thing."

Hard to believe, but true.

The last-place Cowboys (4-8) won for the first time this season without quarterback Tony Romo and are only one game behind the Redskins, Giants and Eagles, who are all 5-7.

"Our guys don't blink," Dallas coach Jason Garrett said. "We've given ourselves an opportunity to stay in it."

After combining to score 18 points in the first 58 1/2 minutes, the teams combined for 17 the frenzied rest of the way. Dallas scored the game's first TD with 74 seconds remaining to lead 16-9 after recovering Jackson's miscue, Washington tied it on Jackson's 28-yard TD catch, and then Bailey hit the go-ahead kick.

"A roller coaster," Redskins quarterback Kirk Cousins called it.

Washington had won its past five home games, but this loss continued a pattern: The Redskins have not won in consecutive weeks all season.

"We just had some unforced errors," coach Jay Gruden said.

None bigger than Jackson's.

With the score knotted at 9-9, Jackson—who hadn't been used as a punt returner this season until last week—caught the kick at his 16, began running up the field and got past the 20, before reversing course and heading backward to the 1. As he again tried to move forward, Jackson was surrounded and the ball popped out, recovered by punter Chris Jones at the 15 with 86 seconds remaining.

"Well, it didn't end up the way we wanted it to," Gruden said about that play, quite an understatement.

Jackson did not deflect blame.

"I take that one on my chin," he said. "I'm a veteran in this league, and I know I need to protect the ball."

Dallas needed only two plays to cash in, jumping in front on McFadden's 6-yard touchdown run. A 41-yard kickoff return plus a 15-yard facemask penalty on J.J. Wilcox set the Redskins up at Dallas' 43, and four plays later, Jackson hauled in a perfect pass from Cousins to pull even with 44 seconds to go.

That left enough time for Cassel to lead Dallas 20 yards in five plays for Bailey's fourth field goal.

"One of the crazier games I've ever been a part of," Cassel said.

He was previously 0-4 as a starter in place of the injured Romo this season.

"I feel stunned we have not been able to win more games without Tony. I thought we could coach it up enough to put it together enough to not have lost those games without Romo early, and we'd be in better shape now," Cowboys owner Jerry Jones said. "We won one on will tonight."

Both QBs were mediocre, with Cousins going 22 for 31 for 219 yards, the one TD and zero interceptions, marking the first time Washington has lost this season when he avoided throwing a pick. Cassel finished 16 for 29 for 222 yards, with several of his throws landing nowhere near teammates.

Bryant was yelling and cursing and generally carrying on along the Cowboys' sideline in the first half, apparently upset about not being thrown the ball. By halftime, he had zero catches and had been targeted twice.

He finished with three receptions for 62 yards, including a diving 42-yard grab that led to—what else?—a field goal.

"I have to do a better job," Cassel said, "of giving him more opportunities."

Heisman Trophy finalists: Henry, Watson, McCaffrey

NEW YORK (AP)—Alabama's Derrick Henry and Stanford's Christian McCaffrey are hoping to return to the Heisman Trophy to the running backs. Clemson's Deshaun Watson can keep it with the QBs.

The two star running backs with very different styles and the dual-threat quarterback of the No. 1 team in the country are headed for New York after being named Heisman finalists Monday night.

Henry and McCaffrey will be looking to break a five-year streak of quarterbacks winning college football's top honor when the trophy is presented Saturday night in Midtown Manhattan.

Mark Ingram of Alabama in 2009 was the last running back—and only Crimson Tide player—to win the Heisman. Since 2000, 13 of the 15 Heisman winners have been quarterbacks.

Among those missing out on a trip to New York City was Oklahoma quarterback Baker Mayfield, LSU running back Leonard Fournette, who was the early season favorite, and Navy quarterback Keenan Reynolds.

Henry seems to be the front runner in a Heisman race that tightened over championship weekend. He ran for 189 yards and a touchdown on 44 carries in the Alabama's Southeastern Conference championship game victory against Florida on Saturday.

Later that night, McCaffrey had 461 all-purpose yards with touchdowns running, receiving and passing as Stanford beat Southern California in the Pac-12 title game, and Watson had 420 total yards and accounted for five touchdowns in Clemson's Atlantic Coast Conference championship game win against North Carolina.

Close Heisman voting has been uncommon in recent years. The last three winners—Marcus Mariota, Jameis Winston and Johnny Manziel—all won by comfortable margins.

The last time there was real suspense at the Heisman presentation was 2009, when Ingram received only 1 percent more of the vote than Stanford's Toby Gerhart. By percentage, that ranks as the closest Heisman vote in history.

A look at the finalists:

HENRY

The 6-foot-3, 240-pound junior carried the Tide (12-1) to the College Football Playoff, setting an SEC record with 1,986 yards and nation's best 23 touchdowns. With a passing game that has been inconsistent, the Tide has leaned heavily on Henry in its biggest games. He carried the ball 90 times in Alabama's last two games and has averaged 180 yards per game against SEC opponents.

"The Heisman Trophy has been a dream of mine since I was a little kid and the chance to go to New York as a finalist is amazing, but none of this would be possible without my coaches and teammates," Henry said in a statement. "The offensive line, the quarterback, wide receivers and tight ends have done an unbelievable job all season and our coaches always put us in a position to be successful."

McCAFFREY

While Henry is the prototypical power runner, McCaffrey is all about elusiveness and versatility. The 200-pound sophomore broke Barry Sanders' NCAA record for all-purpose yards in a season with 3,496. He has scored 13 touchdowns and thrown two TD passes.

He would be Stanford's second Heisman winner, joining Jim Plunkett in 1970. The Cardinal did have a recent run of three straight seasons with the runner-up. Gerhart finished second behind Ingram in '09 and Andrew Luck came in second to Cam Newton (2010) and Robert Griffin III (2011).

"Just found out five minutes ago. I'm a little emotional," McCaffrey told reporters at Stanford.

WATSON

The sophomore has Clemson in the playoff, trying for its first national championship since 1981. Watson fits the mold of recent Heisman winners Cam Newton, RGIII, Manziel and Mariota as a dual-threat quarterback, capable of dominating as a runner or passer.

Watson is the only player in the country who has surpassed 800 yards rushing (887) and 3,500 yards passing (3,512), and he has accounted for 41 touchdowns. He would be Clemson's first Heisman winner.

"This is recognition for a great performance on the field and for the hard work he has put in over the last year after suffering a torn ACL," Clemson coach Dabo Swinney said. "A year ago Saturday night (December 12, 2014) he was in the hospital having surgery. Exactly a year later he will be in New York as a Heisman finalist."

Tan, Imaya top over 40 mixed doubles event

Tournament director Lydia Tan and Ken Imaya dethroned 2014 champions Don Dunlop and Marivic Rosario after winning the over 40 mixed doubles event in the 7th Annual Tan Holdings Tennis Classic.

The Tan-Imaya defeated the top-ranked duo of Rosario and Dunlop in the semifinals, 7-6 (4), 6-4, at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan court last Saturday and then earned 7-5, 6-4 victory in the finals against the tandem of Arn Diaz and Raj Rai to clinch the division crown. Diaz and Rai made it to the finals following a 6-0, 6-1 triumph against Karen Ramsey and Landon Nadler.

The over 40 mixed doubles victory was sort of a revenge for Tan, who teamed up with David Lai last year when they lost to Rosario and Dunlop in the finals, 3-6, 4-6.

Tan and Lai still joined forces in this year's competition and ruled the mixed doubles 4.0 division after earning a 2-0 record in the round-robin contest. The Tan-Lai pair got its first win against last year's runners-up Rosario and Diony Peralta, 7-6 (4), 6-4), last Saturday and the second versus Annie and George Lai, 6-2, 6-3.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, mixed doubles' 4.0 runners-up Diony Peralta and Marivic Rosario and champions Lydia Tan and David Lai pose with their plaques during the awards ceremony for the 7th Tan Holdings Tennis Classic last Sunday at the Hibiscus Hall of Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan.

Meanwhile, eight other pairs were crowned champions in the final week of the Tan Holdings-backed event.

In the open mixed doubles, coach Jeff Race teamed up with junior player Isabel Heras in beating their two opponents in the round-robin contest. Race and Heras prevailed over Malika Miyawaki and Tony Kim, 6-3, 6-2, in last Saturday's morning match and then slipped past eventual runners-up Bobby Cruz and Negahr Rastguiy in the afternoon game, 7-5, 5-7, 10-3, to bag the division championship.

In the open men's doubles finals, Luke Beling and Martin Jambor swept junior players Dylan Ackerman and Seiya Eda, 6-1, 6-1, while Conatsu Kaga and Miyawaki won the all-juniors finale in the women's doubles 4.0 after beating Mimi Sakano and Ami Tsukagoshi, 6-3, 6-3. Miyawaki and Kaga marched into the finals after eliminating the mother-and-daughter pair of Mihoko and Erika Tuttle, 6-1, 5-4 (retired), while Sakano and Tsukagoshi ousted Wendi Herring and Annie Lai, 6-0, 7-5.

In the men's doubles 4.0, the veteran duo of Ronnie Lacbayo and Don Castillo outclassed the junior pair of Steven Goodwin and Vincent Tudela, 6-4, 3-6, 10-6. Top-ranked Tudela and Goodwin barged into the finals after a 6-1, 6-1 semis triumph over Roy Banados and Art Lopez, while Castillo and Lagbayo stunned the No. 2 pair of Bong Gamab and Edgardo Sergio in the other Final Four pairing, 6-0, 7-6 (2).

In the men's doubles 3.0, Alex Park and Clayton Izuka took the division championship after winning over Haruya Eda and A.J. Hudins, 6-4, 6-2, and the father and son tandem of Randy and Richard Steele, 6-2, 6-3. In the women's division, Ayumi Kaga and Keiko Ojima also went 2-0 to top the event following their victories over the pairs of Ami Miyawaki and Megumi Sekiguchi, 6-2, 6-1, and Hyun and Sun Sook Lee (walkover).

In the mixed doubles 3.0, Grace Choi partnered with Hudkins in winning over Vickie Izuka and Daniele Colombo (walkover) and May Ling Colombo and Rintaro Miyawaki, 6-0, 6-1.

Donn Dunlop and Nicky Nichols completed the doubles winners in last weekend's competition after topping the men's over 40 division. The No. 1 seeds secured the division title after a 6-4, 10-4 win over Guam's David Lai and Hong Kong's Eddie Wu. Wu and Lai gained a finals berth following a 7-6 (5), 6-3 semis win over Castillo and Imaya, while Nichols and Dunlop booted out Neo Masinda and Peralta in the other Final Four duel, 6-1, 6-4. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

Camacho leads Guam charge in 'Hell'

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Patrick Camacho led a strong field of 16 male and female bikers from the CNMI's southern island neighbor of Guam in last Saturday's 2015 Hell of the Marianas Century Cycle race around the island of Saipan.

Three other Guam riders also topped their respective age divisions, while Tara Reyes Tydingco of Hagatna was the third best 40-49 female finisher.

The Hagatna-based Camacho finished fifth overall behind men's road bike open division winner Ryutaro Nakamura of Chiba, Japan and three young professional riders from Taichung, Chinese-Taipei.

Camacho pedaled 19.75 miles an hour to finish the 100-kilometer race in 3:08:20, 9:20 behind fourth placer Hsuan Ping Hsu's 2:59:00. He was also the top rider in the 30-39 age group, almost an hour ahead of fellow Guam bet Paul Cuaresma.

Cuaresma, who is from Dededo, finished 29th overall with a time of 4:03:46, while the Gimpo City, South Korea-born Byeong-Seok Jang came in third clocking 4:48:25.

JON PEREZ

Guam's Patrick Camacho works his way up toward the Radar Hill in last Saturday's 2015 Hell of the Marianas Century Cycle race around the island.

Saipan's R.J. Noriega (5:03:16), and South Korean's Ki Ju Ryu (5:19:44) and Heecheol Lee (5:21:35) completed the Top 5 finishers in the 30-39 age division.

Chris Baguio ruled the male 18-29 division coming in 12th overall with a time of 3:26:58 with two other Guam cyclists joining him at the podium.

Timothy Wakefield of Talofofo was the runner-up registering 3:53:26, while Carlo Chow of Tamuning crossed the finish line at 4:57:52.

Ryan Snow of Piti was part of the Top 10 overall finishers to top the 40-49 age group (3:12:17), more than 15 minutes ahead of Tamuning's Derek Horton (3:29:11) with Japan's Katsuki Ishimatsu coming in at third (3:42:09).

Veteran multi-sport athlete Tyce Mister of Saipan was fourth (3:57:47), while Hagatna's Manny Masculino was fifth best in the same age division (4:02:40).

Randall Reeves foiled six Saipan riders to finish on top of the 50-59 year olds. He clocked 3:28:57 against the 3:54:39 of second placer Robert Tamondong. Cesar Fortaleza was third with 4:01:02 while Russ Quinn (4:24:57) and Manny Sitchon (4:31:58) also in Top 5.

Saipan's Jerome Diyco, the other youth rider, ruled the U17 division with a time of 3:50:21, while Mark Noble (4:54:14) bested Stephen Nutting (4:58:51) in the over-60.

Saipan's Kanae Quinn was the fastest female age group rider to claim the 40-49 division crown. She submitted a time of 4:16:45 or close to 10 minutes ahead of compatriot Heather Kennedy (4:26:23).

Guam's Tara Reyes Tydingco was third (4:59:34) while Glorybel Tan (5:46:01) was the other rider in the same age group.

Teen rider Angel Marie Tan (U17, 5:09:42); Hyeonu Seo (18-29, 5:23:45); Sunyong Jang (30-39, 5:45:41); and Susan Marchitti (50-59, 5:56:56) were the other age group winners.

NMSA board to elect new officers next month

The Northern Mariana Sports Association will be choosing a new set of officers for 2016 after seven representatives from different sports associations were nominated to the board.

Any representative of a sports association that is a member of NMSA can be nominated to the board. The nomination was done in last Thursday's NMSA meeting and the election of the board members will be held in the next meeting on Jan. 7.

Mike White (basketball), Jeff Race (tennis), Laurie Peterka (volleyball), Rose Igitol (baseball), Gil Birnbrich (canoe), Kurt Barnes (athletics), and Justing Andrew (canoe) were nominated to the NMSA board.

An athlete and student representative has yet to be nominated and will be filled at a latter time, while swimming's John Hirsch declined to be nominated due to his busy schedule.

The board will then elect the new set of officers namely president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and auditor. ***(Jon Perez)***

MCS

From Page 28

forth with the former recovering from a 19-23 deficit to extend the match. The Lady Knights failed to wrap up the finale quickly as Taimanao hit a couple of wide spikes.

Taimanao then made up for her earlier booboo when she went for another spike, which this time SIS returned, but the shot was wide to the right sideline. With Taimanao's spike, MCS went up 24-21. A short serve from Evangelista kept SIS' hopes alive and the Lady Geckos forced a deadlock, 24-all, after another Taimanao's spike went wide and Sakura Imaya countered with her own spike.

SIS then served and there was a brief exchange before Minami Sakai's return off a setup from Shirley Qian hit the net, giving the lead back to Mt. Carmel, 25-24. Luisa Hahn served for match point and although the Lady Geckos managed to receive the service, Sakai was caught crossing the line as she went for a dink at the net in the next play, ending the finale in favor of the Lady Knights. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

MJD

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markers apiece.

MJD and Ask Y U B fought for the finals berth of the upper bracket and the duel between the No. 1 and 4 seeds of the east division was back to square one after the opening canto, 17-all. MJD struggled offensive early in the game, but managed to keep up with Ask Y U B by making its free throws, while the latter got two field goals apiece from Dave Camacho, Brennan, and Ong.

Ong continued to hit his mark in the second quarter, posting 8 more points to give Ask Y U B a 37-31 halftime advantage.

Lizama sliced Ask Y U B's lead to a deuce at the end of the third, 55-57, as the former CNMI Men's National Team member got his offensive game going at the start of the second half, drilling 13 straight points and 3 more late in that period. Before his third-quarter explosion, Lizama registered only 4 points, converting only one field goal each in the first and second quarter.

With MJD threatening Ask Y U B, Brennan, who was held to 1 point in the third frame, gave his team more breathing room early in the final canto, scoring 8 of their first' 10 points. However, Brennan went cold again in the remaining part of the semis match, while MJD mounted a comeback and stole the victory as Ask Y U B gave up too many fouls in the homestretch.

Ong also played flat in the fourth canto for Ask Y U B, registering only 2 points, while Marvin Rabauliman had a quiet 6 points. Jethro Cruz was only the third Ask Y U B player to log double figures with his 10 points, which were way behind his 26 markers in their 82-74 playoff win against KB Market last week. Another missing piece in Ask Y U B's offense was Sid Quan, who was limited to 2 points after firing 20 against KB Market.

Meanwhile, MJD will face in the finals the winner in the other semis pairing between the upset-minded Maplas and the second-seeded Islander Hoops. Maplas stunned the No. 3-ranked Sonics in last week's quarterfinal round, while Islander ousted the seventh-seeded Triple J.

MJD 80 – Lizama 22, Pelisamen 18, Peredo 12, Estolas 11, De Guzman 6, Gapor 5, Directo 2, Bautista 2.

Ask Y U B 76 – Brennan 18, Ong 18, Cruz 10, Camacho 8, Hammond 6, Rabauliman 6, Standish 6, Quan 2, Chariton 2.

Scoring by quarters: 17-17, 31-37, 55-57, 80-76.

JIU-JITSU

From Page 28

recovering from the lashing of Typhoon Soudelor, he delayed his trip and it is only now that he confirmed his planned visit.

Fowler started as a wrestler in high school and began his Jiu-Jitsu career in 2001. He won the lightweight gold medal in the 2003 Pan American Championships as a blue belt.

For more information on Fowler's training sessions, call Alvarez at 783-4MMA (4662) or at Twitter @TrenchwarZ or at facebook.com/cuki.alvarez.

In other news, undefeated bantamweight fighter Kwan Ho "Handsome" Kwak of Korea is on Saipan for a few days to also train at the Trench Tech Gym in preparation for his championship fight against Kyle "Money" Aguon in PXC 51 on Jan. 16, 2016.

The Korean Top Team member, who is ranked third among 94 active bantamweights in Korea, is looking for some sparring partners while staying here on Saipan.

Kwan is the reigning Top Fighting Championship bantamweight titleholder after winning the vacant 135-lb belt against Han Bin Park in Top FC 8 by way of technical knockout last Aug. 15.

2015 Hell of Marianas Century Cycle Race

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Japan's Ryutaro Nakamura celebrates his victory in last Saturday's 2015 Hell of Marianas Century Cycle Race.

Three bikers from Taiwan and eventual champion Ryutaro Nakamura of Japan pedal along Beach Road.

Japan's Katsuki Ishimatsu leads Saipan's Nap Dizon as they head south of the 100-kilometer course.

A group of Saipan bikers head out of the Airport Road.

Mieko Carey leads a small group of bikers cruising along Beach Road.

Guam bikers try to catch up with the lead group.

Women's champion Mieko Carey smiles as she nears the finish line at Mariana Resort.

Bikers head back to Marpi for the first 25-kilometer of the 100K race.

Bikers leave Mariana Resort for the turnaround point at the former Palms Resort.

Lowry scores 27, Raptors beat Lakers 102-93 to end slide

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Sports

Tan, Imaya top over 40 mixed doubles event

PAGE 26

MCS beats SIS in high school v-ball finals

Mt. Carmel School spoiled Saipan International School's bid for a sweep in the 2015-2016 Coalition of Private Schools Sports Association Volleyball League after winning the girls high school championship.

The Lady Knights swept the Lady Geckos in last Friday's finale at the Whispering Palms court, 25-15, 26-24, to prevent SIS from claiming all three division crowns of the COPSSA volleyball league. SIS earlier took the middle school title against Grace Christian Academy and also topped the boys high school division.

The victory was sweet revenge for Mt. Carmel as the Lady Geckos did not only avenge their boys team's loss to SIS in last Thursday's finals, but also their 2013-2014 season defeat against SIS when the league first introduced a separate competition for the girls high school.

Karleen Reyes was part of that losing squad and this year she was on the winning side, teaming up with Jan Travilla, Amalina Evangelista, Luisa and Ya Han, and Janika Taimanao in dethroning SIS.

The Lady Knights set up the finals sweep by taking control of the match early, as they raced to an 8-2 lead in the opening set. Reyes and Luisa Hahn combined for four aces, while Travilla scored twice on good ball placement and MCS got the other points off SIS' errors.

Despite trailing early, SIS did not press the panic button yet and won the next exchange to grab the lead, 13-12. The Lady Geckos capitalized on their ceiling advantage and athleticism to battle back, but they were held to three points in the remaining part of the opening set, while Luisa Hahn closed out strong for Mt. Carmel, scoring the Lady Knights' last four points off her aces to five her team the 10-point win.

In the second set, SIS and Mt. Carmel battled back and

See MCS on Page 26

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Mt. Carmel School's Jan Travilla tosses the ball up during the first set of their title game against Saipan International School in the girls high school division of the COPSSA volleyball league last Friday at the Whispering Palms court.

MJD advances to division finals

MJD Enterprise moved into the finals of the east division of the 2015 San Antonio Community Action Network Basketball League after eking out an 80-76 victory against Ask Y U B last Monday at the San Antonio court.

MJD earned a living from the foul line in the fourth quarter to overhaul a 10-point deficit and foil Ask Y U B's bid for an upset in their semis duel. MJD scored 10 of its last 13 points from the stripe to turn things around after falling behind by 10 midway in the final canto, 59-69.

Errol Peredo and Jack Lizama knocked in four charities apiece and the former went on to tally 9 straight points in the fourth frame to spearhead MJD's recovery. Jun Estolas, who had only one field goal in the first three periods and was scoreless in the second and third, also stepped up in the fourth, adding 6 markers, including a triple in the closing minutes of the match.

Lizama top-scored for MJD with his 24 points, while Freddie Pelisamen chipped in 18 and Peredo and Estolas also finished in twin digits with 12 and 11, respectively. Donovan Brennan and Djay Ong paced Ask Y U B after tallying 18

See MJD on Page 26

CONTRIUTED PHOTO
MJD Enterprise's Jun Estolas pulls up for a jumper against Islander's Irvyn Malonzo during an earlier game in the open east division of the San Antonio caging at the San Antonio court.

Jiu-jitsu vet Fowler to arrive Thursday

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

TRENCH TECH

Brazilian Jiiu-Jitsu veteran Mike Fowler is set to arrive on Saipan at 1pm tomorrow for a weeklong visit and seminar at the TrenchTech Gym in Garapan.

TrenchTech promoter Cuki Alvarez confirmed the news to the *Saipan Tribune* via a Facebook message where he sent Fowler's flight itinerary.

Fowler, a five-time American National Jiu-Jitsu Championships gold medalist in three weight classes, will be arriving to Saipan via Guam and will leave on Dec. 17. He will conduct daily gi seminars in submission grappling.

Alvarez said a $50 donation would be collected for members who are interested in joining the nightly seminar/training with Fowler to help the cost of his trip to the CNMI.

FACEBOOK
Mike Fowler, top, in action while competing in the 2009 Tokyo Open. Fowler is set to arrive tomorrow to hold a weeklong Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu seminar at the TrenchTech Gym in Garapan.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to train with a world class BJJ black belt for one week at a fraction of the price compared to a two-hour seminar that cost [$200] or sometimes more. Take advantage and let it count," added Alvarez.

Fowler, a many-time medalist in the Asian Open Championship, was originally set to arrive in September but with Saipan still without power, water, and

See JIU-JITSU on Page 26